

صكيات الامل

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ardia

Friday April 26 1996

Abu Dhabi D 8.50	Amman J 2.20	Ankara P 10	Antananarivo M 10	Bahrain B 0.85	Belgium BF 10	Brussels B 10	Cardiff CF 10	Chennai I 10	Columbo C 10	Cyprus P 10	Doha Q 10	Dublin D 10	Geneva G 10	Hong Kong HK 25	Houston H 10	Islamabad I 10	Jakarta J 10	Jordan J 10	Kuala Lumpur L 10	London L 10	Lyons L 10	Manila M 10	Medan M 10	Metz M 10	Montevideo M 10	Mumbai M 10	Nairobi N 10	Paris P 10	Rabat R 10	Rangoon R 10	Riyadh R 10	Singapore S 10	Sofia S 10	Taipei T 10	Tel Aviv T 10	Tokyo T 10	Zurich Z 10
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The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
46.537

Arts, music, books

How the SAS blew its cover

Everything But The Girl, take two



Out of the bedsit, into the jungle

Music, page 6

Family ends private murder prosecution as judge rules out vital evidence



Stephen Lawrence's father, Neville, left, and aunt Cheryl Staley, centre, being comforted by family friend Ros Howells yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN SMITH

Anger after race case collapse

Campaigners vow to fight on after three men cleared



CAMPAIGNERS and lawyers representing the family of murdered black teenager Stephen Lawrence vowed to continue with inquiries into his death after the case against three men accused of his killing collapsed at the Old Bailey yesterday.

Shortly afterwards, Mr Justice Curtis instructed the jury foreman to formally acquit Neil Acourt, aged 20, Luke Knight, aged 18, and Gary Dobson, aged 20. They had denied that they, with others, murdered Mr Lawrence, who was stabbed to death at a bus stop in Editham, south-east London, in April 1993.

Mr Lawrence, aged 18, was murdered by a mob of up to six white youths solely because he was black.

Mr Khan said the family were "extremely disappointed" that the judge had ruled out vital evidence from a witness who claimed to have seen the defendants take part in Mr Lawrence's murder.

Mr Lawrence's parents, Neville and Doreen, had raised around £70,000 through donations to bring the private murder prosecution, the fourth in 130 years, after the Crown Prosecution Service dropped proceedings against two white men in July 1993, saying there was insufficient evidence to secure a conviction.

£5bn VAT blow for ministers

The Government was thrown into such chaos last night after its hopes of a vote-winning Budget were threatened by a Court of Appeal ruling that could cost the Treasury up to £5 billion in back tax.

The judgment also added to the furore over the impact of European law, further angering Eurosceptic MPs.

The Treasury said it would appeal to the House of Lords against yesterday's ruling by two senior judges that a Customs provision which has been in force since VAT was introduced in 1973 is wrong in its treatment of interest-free credit deals.



ous retailer, Kingsway Furniture Group, said his client was due £10 million including interest. "Just think of all the interest-free credit over the years. Including interest going back all that time it must be £5 billion."

difficult for Customs & Excise to appeal. It looks as if they have lost fair and square." David Heathcoat-Amory, the Paymaster General, said last night the £5 billion figure was "wildly exaggerated and has no basis in any calculation by Customs or Treasury".

Magistrate's rough justice laid before the Queen

Mr Khan said the family were "extremely disappointed" that the judge had ruled out vital evidence from a witness who claimed to have seen the defendants take part in Mr Lawrence's murder.

Prague Writers' Festival 1996

This year the Prague Writers' Festival, directed by Michael March, will once again showcase a selection of fine authors from around the world.

MPs threaten to mangle divorce bill

Rightwingers, led by Edward Leigh, are set to mangle the bill still further in committee. Labour warned that unless the Government agrees to inject a new emphasis on marriage reconciliation and the needs of children, it may vote against the bill's third reading in June.

In the Commons, John Major accused the Labour leader, Tony Blair, of being willing to shelve his Christian conscience for party political advantage.

Wednesday night's free vote as a humiliation for his government. The 200-196 vote extended from one year to 18 months the minimum period before divorce is granted.

Mr Major said his entire party, including ministers, had been given a genuinely free vote, claiming Mr Blair and his henchmen did not understand the parliamentary concept of a free vote.

"I gave my word and have kept it," Mr Major snapped. He then played on Mr Blair's Christianity for the first time. "The next time you talk to us about your conscience, and matters relating to church and conscience, perhaps you will indicate that it doesn't apply when you see political advantage."

Britain

World News

City

Sport

Comment and Letters

Arts 4/5; Books 9/13; Radio 16; TV 15

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Sketch

Divided by a common language



Simon Hoggart

It's curious that as the policies of the main parties move closer... with the two sides becoming indistinguishable, like the pigs and the men at the end of Animal Farm... debate in the Commons is increasingly riotous.

again and tax will soon be nine-eighths per cent, and we'll need ID's not just to show who's got the right to be here, but to show the guards to get out of here! A few Tories cheered wanly. Mr Evans's rant is a warning asset. Austin Mitchell (Lab, Grimsby) said that robbery had increased 484 per cent since the Conservatives came to office.

More attacks expected before Ulster elections □ Second failure for 'impaired' mainland operation

Bridge bomb IRA's biggest

Duncan Campbell, Richard Norton-Taylor and David Starrock in Dublin

THE IRA stepped up its bombing campaign in England with a device containing the most powerful explosives ever used in a mainland bomb. Security sources said last night that the bombs aimed at the transport infrastructure could be expected before the elections in Northern Ireland next month.

seeking a "spectacular" before the elections in Northern Ireland on May 30. Previously it had appeared that it merely wanted to cause minor disruption to show that it was active, without derailing the peace process.



Hammersmith Bridge, west London, where 30lb of Semtex failed to explode

two coded telephone warnings, the first at 10.22pm. The area was cordoned off and there were two small explosions at 10.50pm. The device was hidden in two containers the size of a briefcase. The detonators did not ignite the explosives. This is the second time a large IRA

bomb has malfunctioned, the first being when IRA man Ed O'Brien was blown up on the M1 bus at the Aldwych on February 15. The double failure is taken to indicate that the IRA's bomb-making operation on the mainland is impaired. There is no evidence, as has

been suggested in the past, that the operation was deliberately sabotaged. The bomb was placed on the anniversary of the Easter Rising in Dublin on April 24 1916. Security sources said yesterday they expected further attacks on a variety of targets to apply pressure on the Gov-

ernment. They speculated that the Aldwych incident, and the discovery of documents and bomb-making equipment at O'Brien's flat, may have forced the IRA to use less experienced activists. In Dublin, all parties condemned the bomb as unhelpful to the peace process. David Adams, of the Ulster Democratic Party, the loyalist group which has strong links with the paramilitary Ulster Defence Association, did not however, believe that it would jeopardise the loyalist ceasefire.

US plans rapid exit from Bosnia

John Palmer in Brussels, David Fairhall, and Martin Walker in Washington

THE first outlines of a United States exit-plan for its forces in Bosnia are emerging, with a European-led operation remaining in the former Yugoslav republic. But US backup ready to come to the rescue if necessary. Under a proposal now being circulated, US rapid reaction forces would be based in Hungary, and US air power would be available to any Nato forces staying in Bosnia after the alliance's peace-implementation mandate runs out at the end of this year.



US soldiers patrol Caparde, near Tuzla, stopping Bosnian Muslims from entering a Serb-held area to visit their former homes

this week's meetings of the military committee. "There will be an ongoing need for peacekeeping troops for some further time." In Whitehall yesterday, officials were not prepared to discuss the Hungarian plan, except to dismiss it as "speculation". Ministers remain publicly committed to withdrawing the present Nato forces by December 30, the deadline set by last year's Dayton peace agreement. But the Defence Secretary,

Michael Portillo, has privately indicated that British troops would not remain unless US ground forces were also involved. The 19,000 US troops are expected to be home within a month of the December 30 deadline. Yet British military sources also acknowledge that the large US division based in Tuzla, northern Bosnia, has not been as active as expected, given its central political importance. Constrained by instruc-

tions from Washington to avoid expanding their mission beyond the mandate specified by the Dayton accord or taking casualties — particularly in an election year — US troops rarely move around in groups of less than four vehicles, for fear of being ambushed or taken hostage. "Saying that the country ought to be politically unified before Nato pulls out is too hard a task," William Perry, the US defence secretary, told the New York Times.

The new minimal US goal is simply to fend off another war, not to unify Bosnia, nor to prevent the emergence of a Greater Serbia, nor even to help enforce international humanitarian law by arresting suspected war criminals, he said. On the evidence of the last four months, Mr Perry added, real Bosnian unification is "certainly not going to happen by the time Nato is ready to pull out of there". "What would be the argu-

ment at that point for keeping Nato in longer? I can only think of one, and that is to prevent a war from starting up again — not to reunify the country," he said. "What kind of a force deployment do we need to provide an adequate deterrence for that not happening? Is air power alone sufficient? If ground forces have to supplement, do they have to be located in Bosnia or just a ready reserve force on standby?"

First night

Fascism echoes patrician culture

Michael Billington

The Designated Mourner

WALLACE SHAWN'S new play, The Designated Mourner, is a minimalist work not unlike My Dinner with Andre; no action, no instant narrative, no plot, it is an extraordinary and haunting piece about the nature of America, in particular about the contest between an isolated patrician culture and an answering spiritual fascism.

In fact, envisions an apocalyptic world which has seen what Jack calls "the disembowelling of the over-bowelled". What is remarkable about Shawn's play — or series of intercut monologues — is its evenness of tone and sense of historical determinism. Shawn recognises the value of high culture yet condemns those who hug it to themselves as if it were their own. He also understands the separation of those who are locked out of the secret garden, yet bewails the descent into barbarism of a society where "everyone on earth who could read John Donne was dead".

Three cleared as murder case collapses

Knives and racism on film

Viviek Claudthery

POLICE officers installed a secret camera and microphone in a plug socket in the home of Gary Dobson, who was acquitted yesterday of the murder of Stephen Lawrence. Two films, shot by the camera at Mr Dobson's home in Eatham, south-east London, in December 1994, showed him, his co-defendants, Neil Acourt and Luke Knight, and friends using racist language and wielding knives in an apparent practice stabbing of black people. There is a suggestion that they knew they were being bugged but not filmed.

those cock suckers what it's all about." In other scenes, Mr Acourt and Mr Knight can be heard yelling racist abuse at black entertainers while watching the Royal Variety Performance on television and at leading black athletes while watching the Sports Personality of the Year programme. Throughout the films, all three of those who stood trial for Lawrence's murder fire off abuse against black and Asian people. Mr Acourt describes in detail his hatred for them, saying that if he were to kill himself he would first "kill every black c---, every copper, every paki". Throughout the racist abuse, Mr Dobson and Mr Acourt can be seen walking around the house, wielding a large kitchen knife and stabbing furniture with an overarm motion. At other times they discuss torturing black and Asian people and setting fire to them. Several weapons were seized from the homes of the three men, including a Gurkha knife and a gun. The films were to have been shown to the jury at the private prosecution brought by Lawrence's parents.

Road tax scams peak

David Hencke Westminster Correspondent

CUTS in staff cuts at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency in Swansea are making it easier for car owners to evade the £140-a-year road tax, MPs have been told by the Department of Transport. Non-payment has reached a record £165 million a year and the agency is failing to meet

its own target of recovering £70 million a year from evaders. The figures were released following a National Audit Office report into the efficiency of the agency in pursuing evaders. Some 88,000 people who should have been prosecuted were let off by the agency because it failed to serve notices on time, missed the court prosecution dates, or the offenders had gone bust, fore the DVLA could act.

Advertisement for Renault Megane featuring the slogan "BELT UP" and a photo of the car. Text includes: "The new Megane is giving a talk on safety. Call 0800 701 702. It could be fundamental." and "THE NEW RENAULT MEGANE - IT TALKS YOUR LANGUAGE"

طالكا من الازهر

Girlfriend whose elderly parents were murdered hails 'victory for love and truth'



Harry and Megan Toose: Treated Jonathon Jones as family

Judges free man jailed over killings at farmhouse

Duncan Campbell Crime Correspondent

A MAN jailed for life for the murder of his girlfriend's parents was yesterday freed by the Court of Appeal after judges decided his conviction was unsafe.

are unsafe for reasons which we shall give on a future occasion," said Lord Justice Rose. Accordingly the convictions will be quashed and the defendant will be discharged.



Jonathon Jones hugs girlfriend Cheryl Toose after being freed by the Court of Appeal yesterday

She said last night that she had never had any doubt of Mr Jones's innocence and would never have supported him if she had believed he was in any way involved.

quity. "In these circumstances, while South Wales police will act swiftly on any new evidence which may be received in the near future, no fresh investigation into facts which have already been examined will be started."

was in Orpington, Kent, on the day of the murders. No scientific evidence linked Mr Jones to the killings. He had a good relationship with the Tooses, who treated him as part of the family, and had no significant money problems.

The case is the third involving South Wales police in which murder convictions have been quashed after high-profile campaigns and appeals.

Transport green paper backfires

Keith Harper and Rebecca Smithers

Main points

A DEVASTATING official indictment of the state of Britain's roads was withheld by the Government last night as its much delayed green paper on transport received a lukewarm response from environmental groups and the Opposition.

- A new system of planning for trunk roads
Increased powers for local authorities to manage traffic demand
Tougher control of city car use
New initiatives to promote bus use
National cycling targets to promote cycling
Increased use of private finance for transport, particularly the railways

Critics wonder still after 'Alice' find

Giles Foden

THE dark rumours about him took on the currency of truth long ago: Lewis Carroll was over-interested in young girls. Now, it seems, the author and Oxford mathematician might be on the point of rehabilitation.



The young Alice Liddell as photographed by Charles Dodgson (right), alias Lewis Carroll

son family archives in Guildford Museum Room for a forthcoming screenplay, has discovered a fragment of paper. She believes it to be a summary of the diaries' missing pages, written by Violet Dodgson, one of the nieces.

hood were pointed out by the critic William Empson as long ago as 1935. In a famous essay in his book Some Versions Of Pastoral.

Eric Griffiths, a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and author of The Printed Voice Of Victorian Poetry, said yesterday: "That his writing is paedophilic in a certain sense is absolutely true. Yet surely the point is that the evidence of the books wanting to preserve the state of being both an adult and a child is stronger than any fragmentary biographical data could be."

As Peter Mandelson has already made plain, New Labour ain't about anything if it ain't about lowering taxes for the better off, and it's high time Clare - lovely, headstrong Clare - began to realise this. Bel Littlejohn

Dixons UNBEATABLE DEALS ON LATEST GAMES. TOY STORY FOR SEGA MEGADRIVE £32.99. SEGA MEGADRIVE PRIMAL RAGE £19.99. SONIC & KNUCKLES £19.99. FIFA 96 £34.99. SONY PLAYSTATION ALIEN TRILOGY £44.99. THEME PARK £34.99. PGA GOLF 96 £34.99. ACTUA SOCCER £39.99. SUPER NINTENDO PRIMAL RAGE £17.99. SUPER PUNCHOUT £19.99. KILLER INSTINCT £29.99.

4 BRITAIN

Farmers win right to fight EU

Michael White, Paul Brown and Stephen Bates

FARMERS cleared the first hurdle in their legal battle to challenge the worldwide ban on beef yesterday, as MPs were told in the Commons that a cull of 40,000 cattle most at risk of BSE would only go ahead if the European Union agreed to plans to have the embargo on beef exports lifted.

The National Farmers' Union won leave to seek a judicial review in the High Court of last month's EU decision to ban beef exports from Britain. Mr Justice Turner said the National Farmers' Union had an "arguable case" that the EU ban was illegal and ordered the case should be referred to the European Court "at the earliest expedient moment".

In the Commons, Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, admitted in reply to a question from Labour on Britain's announcement of a culling plan, that his proposals to target high risk cattle "amounting to tens of thousands rather than hundreds of thousands" — would not be essential in terms of either human or animal health, given the improvements in the chain already introduced.

He told MPs: "I have made it clear to commissioner Franz Fischler that the Government would only consider implementing such a scheme in the context of plans for the lifting of the EU ban on British beef."

The NFU's application was for a judicial review of the refusal by the Ministry of Agriculture and Customs and Excise to issue health certificates for live animals for export. Since they were carry-

ing out the instructions of the EU, it is a method of challenging the commission's power. The European Court is the only forum that can rule on the validity of the ban, and if it found for the farmers they would be able to claim millions in compensation from the commission.

Stuart Isaacs QC, for the NFU, told the judge that the effect of the ban had been catastrophic. In 1995 the UK had exported beef and beef products worth £520 million worldwide. As a result of the ban that trade had ceased completely, putting at risk the livelihoods of more than 25,000 agricultural workers, 62,000 in meat processing, 7,500 in the cattle auction business and 8,500 in the haulage industry.

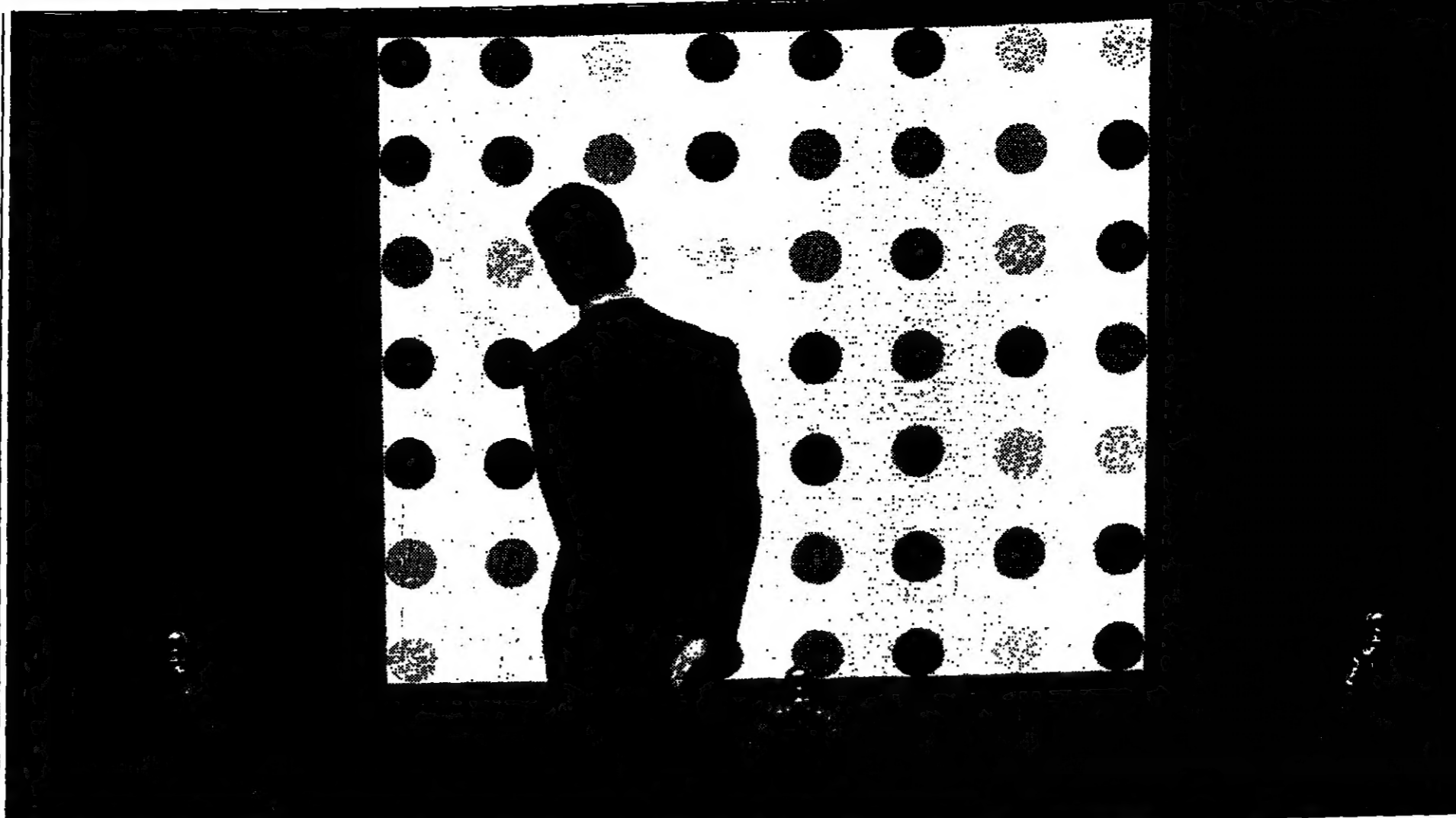
Mr Hogg is due to resume what he called "negotiating and persuading" in Luxembourg on Monday, amid frustration among MPs that the valuable time has been lost.

In Brussels, doubts were growing last night about whether the slaughter of 40,000 additional cattle would be enough to satisfy EU agriculture ministers.

Diplomats from some member states expressed reservations about the extent of the cull, pointing out that they had already slaughtered more cattle in Britain than the Dutch who have killed 64,000 veal calves and the French who have also killed imported cattle.

A commission spokesman said of the latest British proposal: "It is a step in the right direction, but how big a step or how far it goes in the right direction have yet to be decided."

Officials said the commission would not accept pre-conditions from Britain in return for lifting the ban.



Spectator spot... Adrenochrome Semicarbazone Sulfonate by artist Damien Hirst will be his first major work to be sold at auction by Christie's, London PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SELLTOE

Journalists at suspended BBC Arabic service fear for their lives as they face deportation

Kathy Evans

MORE than 30 Arab journalists who worked for the BBC Arabic television channel face deportation from Britain following the suspension of the corporation's news supply contract with the

Saudi satellite station Orbit. The service was suspended last Sunday after it broadcast an Arabic version of the Panorama programme Death of a Prince on human rights in Saudi Arabia. About 200 staff are expected to lose their jobs. The 30 journalists facing deportation were on work per-

mits tied to their jobs at the service. Two said they would be in extreme danger if they were sent home, because of some broadcasts critical of their governments and militant Islamic groups in their countries. Both have asked the BBC management to intervene with the Home Office

in their cases. One said he would be killed if forced to return to the Sudan. He said he had been in exile for 16 years after spending nearly a year in jail. "If I go back I know I will end up in one of those ghost houses and be tortured. I went to school with half the cabinet. The Is-

lamic government knows me well and my work for BBC." A former editor at the service said: "Many of us think that the corporation knew what it was doing when it broadcast the Arabic version of Panorama. They knew it would mean the end of the Orbit contract. We believe the

service was killed off in the interests of British business." BBC Worldwide said every effort would be made to find another communication channel for the Arabic service. "We recognise the BBC has obligations to its staff and we will do the right thing by them," said a spokesman.

Tabloids fight as World Cup 'spot the ball' becomes farce

Alex Bellon

THEY thought it was all over... and it was too, for a moment.

Geoff Hurst was said to be thrilled that the ball he kicked into the net three times during England's 1966 World Cup victory had been discovered in Dusseldorf, Germany.

Total Football magazine which kicked off a campaign to find the famous orange ball was also overjoyed and said that its return to England would have a talismanic effect and improve the ailing fortunes of the national team.

But before the ball had time to reach Hurst, the Sun announced yesterday that it too had discovered the ball — a hundred miles away in a cellar near Augsburg.

Then the Daily Mirror, turning the leathery piece of sporting heritage into a kind of political football, informed Hurst's agent, David Davis, last night that in fact it had found the ball and would present it to the footballer today.

Mr Davis said yesterday the whole affair had turned into a farce. "Until all the balls have been looked at properly, how can we tell?"

The last claim was from a man in Hunslet, West Yorkshire, who called a radio station saying he won it in a local charity raffle.

Cluster of CJD cases in Kent

Alan Watkins

AN APPARENT cluster of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease has come to light in Kent. It was disclosed yesterday, and government scientists are investigating three further suspected cases among women aged between 20 and 30.

It will be many months before it is established whether any of the cases involve the new strain of CJD which appears more closely related to bovine spongiform encephalopathy than to the better known sporadic form of CJD, and which convinced scientists that BSE had probably crossed into humans.

One member of the spongiform encephalopathy advisory committee (SEAC) said: "If more cases among young age groups are reported for the rest of this year, we have to face the fact that BSE somehow represents a major threat to public health."

The victims in the apparent cluster around Ashford, Kent, are Graham Brown, aged 38, a fireman of Ashford, Barry Baker, 27, a woodcutter of High Halden, and an unnamed Ashford man aged 56, who may be a victim of the sporadic form of CJD. Other apparent clusters

have been reported in London and in Bridlington, North Yorkshire. Much more important is the fall in the age profile of CJD sufferers. At least one of the Kent cases is thought to involve the new CJD strain — an assessment based on the way the symptoms present themselves.

The new suspected cases disclosed by the Department of Health were reported between January 1 and April 16 and it is difficult for scientists to explain.

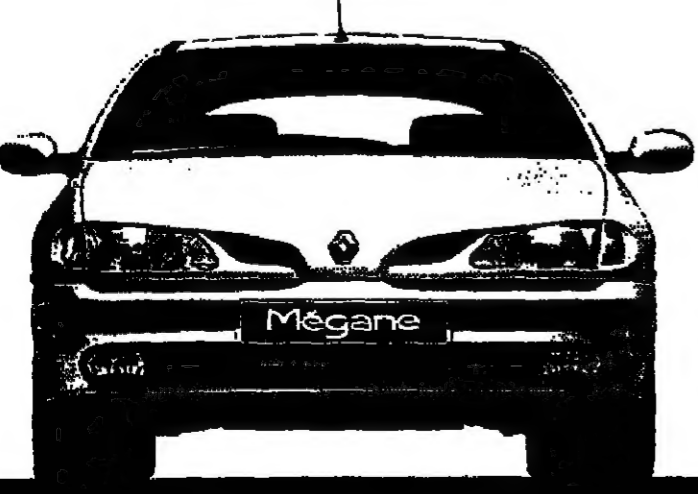
The following figures for cases this year were given to the Guardian: age under 20, no new cases; 20 to 30, three women and one man, thought to include one of the Ashford victims; 30 to 40, no new cases; 41 to 50, three women, one suspected of having a rare variant of CJD, Gerschler-Strauss syndrome; 51 to 60, one woman; 61 and over, three women.

French doctors are today questioning the link between BSE and CJD, writes Chris Millill. They say they have seen a case of the new form of the illness which appears to have no links with beef. The researchers point out if other cases emerge in European countries without BSE in cattle, it will mean cows are not the cause of the disease in humans.

ALLIANCE DOMESTIC CENTRAL HEATING ESTATE AGENTS PLUMBERS REMOVALS & ALWAYS CONSERVATORIES PUBS ACCOUNTANTS CAR BREAKDOWN RECOVERY CAR SERVICES FLORISTS PLUMBERS REPLACEMENT WINDOWS TAXIS & PRIVATE HIRE VE DY REPAIRS ROOFING SERVICES LOCKSMITHS PIZZAS GLAZIERS CAR HIRE SOLICIT E TELEPHONES ELECTRICIANS HOTELS BLOCKED DRAINS & PIPE CLEANING COUR NING & INSTALLATION DOMESTIC CENTRAL HEATING ESTATE AGENTS PLUMBERS AGE TAKEAWAYS CONSERVATORIES ACCOUNTANTS CAR BREAKDOWN RECOVER GARAGE SERVICES FLORISTS REPLACEMENT WINDOWS TAXIS & PRIVATE HIRE VE ODY REPAIRS ROOFING SERVICES LOCKSMITHS PIZZAS GLAZIERS CAR HIRE SOLIC E TELEPHONES ELECTRICIANS HOTELS BLOCKED DRAINS & PIPE CLEANING COUR ALLIANCE DOMESTIC CENTRAL HEATING ESTATE AGENTS PLUMBERS REMOVALS & ALWAYS CONSERVATORIES PUBS ACCOUNTANTS CAR BREAKDOWN RECOVERY CAR SERVICES FLORISTS PLUMBERS REPLACEMENT WINDOWS TAXIS & PRIVATE HIRE VE DY REPAIRS ROOFING SERVICES LOCKSMITHS PIZZAS GLAZIERS CAR HIRE SOLICIT E TELEPHONES ELECTRICIANS HOTELS BLOCKED DRAINS & PIPE CLEANING COUR NING & INSTALLATION DOMESTIC CENTRAL HEATING ESTATE AGENTS PLUMBERS AGE TAKEAWAYS CONSERVATORIES ACCOUNTANTS CAR BREAKDOWN RECOVER GARAGE SERVICES FLORISTS REPLACEMENT WINDOWS TAXIS & PRIVATE HIRE VE ODY REPAIRS ROOFING SERVICES LOCKSMITHS PIZZAS GLAZIERS CAR HIRE SOLIC E TELEPHONES ELECTRICIANS HOTELS BLOCKED DRAINS & PIPE CLEANING COUR ALLIANCE DOMESTIC CENTRAL HEATING ESTATE AGENTS PLUMBERS REMOVALS & ALWAYS CONSERVATORIES PUBS ACCOUNTANTS CAR BREAKDOWN RECOVERY CAR SERVICES FLORISTS PLUMBERS REPLACEMENT WINDOWS TAXIS & PRIVATE HIRE VE DY REPAIRS ROOFING SERVICES LOCKSMITHS PIZZAS GLAZIERS CAR HIRE SOLICIT E TELEPHONES ELECTRICIANS HOTELS BLOCKED DRAINS & PIPE CLEANING COUR NING & INSTALLATION DOMESTIC CENTRAL HEATING ESTATE AGENTS PLUMBERS AGE TAKEAWAYS CONSERVATORIES ACCOUNTANTS CAR BREAKDOWN RECOVER GARAGE SERVICES FLORISTS REPLACEMENT WINDOWS TAXIS & PRIVATE HIRE VE ODY REPAIRS ROOFING SERVICES LOCKSMITHS PIZZAS GLAZIERS CAR HIRE SOLIC E TELEPHONES ELECTRICIANS HOTELS BLOCKED DRAINS & PIPE CLEANING COUR

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6 WORLD NEWS

Russia and China form united front

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

WITH champagne toasts and bearing bonhomie, China and Russia declared a "strategic partnership" for the next century yesterday and, in a slap at the United States, vowed to resist the imposition of a new hegemony.

Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Jiang Zemin agreed in Beijing to set up a telephone hotline, increase military co-operation and boost mutual trade, currently worth only a ninth of that between China and the US.

"Sino-Russian friendly relations have entered a new era," said Mr Jiang. "China does not and will not pose any threat to Russia."

Both sides denied any de-

'Sino-Russian friendly relations have entered a new era'

Jiang Zemin

'I can't name a single question on which we would have different opinions'

Boris Yeltsin

Nato towards Russia's border as "impermissible".

Concrete issues involving money rather than rhetoric proved more difficult. Neither side would say whether agreement had been reached on a gas pipeline from Siberia to the Yellow Sea, billed as the centrepiece of a new commercial partnership.

The mood of carefully orchestrated amity contrasted sharply with the bitterness surrounding previous trips by Kremlin leaders.

"I can't name a single question on which we would have different opinions," said President Yeltsin, who is using the trip to enhance his image as an international statesman before Russia's presidential elections in June.

So effective was he that he announced agreement on one issue on which it was clear none existed. He told a press conference that China had promised to join the international ban on nuclear tests by the end of the year. China's foreign ministry quickly disented, saying details had yet to be discussed.

Mr Yeltsin's politicking contributed the only public sour note so far to the visit, which continues today with a trip to Shanghai to sign a confidence-building pact with China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

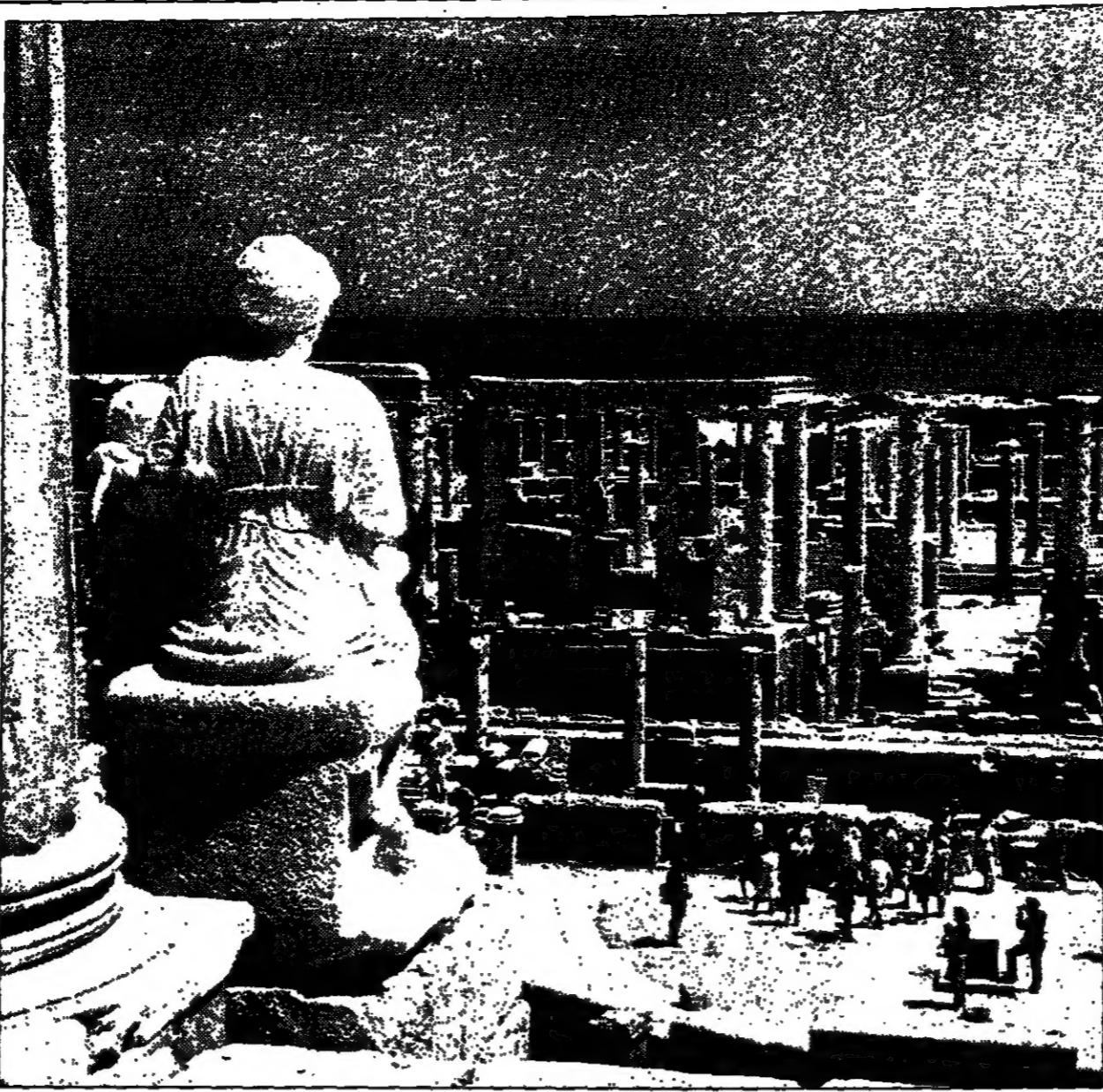
Addressing the Chinese Communist Party leadership, Mr Yeltsin warned that victory by his Communist Party rival Gennady Zyuganov in June would bring catastrophe. "If they win, civil war would start in Russia. This would be an end to reforms. This cannot be allowed."

Officials signed 13 agreements relating to the 2,700-mile border, and co-operation on space, energy and nuclear power, but few of them appear to do much more than reaffirm previous accords. Details were scarce, particularly on military matters.

Russia began talks yesterday with the Paris Club of government creditors on rescheduling \$38 billion in debt, optimistic that it will soon reach final agreement with its bank creditors.

Growing hopes that the country will soon announce a closing date for an agreement to restructure \$55 billion in debt with the London Club of commercial bank creditors pushed up Russian loan prices.

Leader comment, page 8



Long-standing attraction... Westerners are drawn by well-preserved Roman sites like this one at Leptis Magna.

Tourism thrives in Gadafy's desert

Westerners are discovering Libya, as Kathy Evans found recently in Tripoli

LIBYA, the land of Colonel Gadafy and considered by the British and American governments to be one of the main sponsors of international terrorism, is now playing host to thousands of well-heeled Western tourists.

"Libya's lovely," said one British tourist, who did not want to be identified. "I don't know why more people don't come here."

Getting there is an exercise in endurance. United Nations sanctions, in force since 1992 because Libya refused to hand over two suspects wanted for the Lockerbie bombing, have cut the country off to air travellers.

Visitors now have to

make a six-hour journey by car from Djerba in neighbouring Tunisia. Alternatively, there is the 2,000-mile trek from Cairo or 13-hour boat ride from Malta.

Service also leaves a lot to be desired. Most hotels are state-owned and Libyans are assigned to roles as reception clerks or waiters.

Another disadvantage is that alcohol is banned in Libya.

Yet tourism has become the country's fastest growing business, providing the only source of foreign currency other than oil.

Libya boasts the best and most complete Roman ruins in the world at Leptis Magna, Sabratha and Shabat. In the south, there is the 4,000-year-old city of Ghadames, which claims to be the oldest and most ecologically efficient city in the world.

But for most tourists now venturing into Libya, the spectacular desert is the greatest attraction.

"Obviously, Libya is not for larger lumps of the sun, sea, and sex crowd," commented Salem Magadmi, of Sahara Tours. "The desert freaks are our market, and for them we can offer the best in desert camping and the world's cleanest air and environment."

Tourists can spend a month touring desert oases and lush oases in four-wheel drives with Tuareg bedouin guides. But it is

not cheap. Tours are £90 a day, including hotels and transport.

"I've had a wonderful holiday and I felt very safe here," said Swiss school-teacher, Sylvie Perinjalmet, aged 40, who spent a week camping in the desert.

Germans provide Libya's top tourist market, followed by the Italians, Spanish and Swiss.

"We are planning to market ourselves in London this year," said the guide from Sahara Tours. "We would like to do the same in the United States, but there are still a few problems."

The biggest of those problems is that Americans are banned by law from visiting Libya. An American discovered to be working in Libya's oil fields was recently fined \$250,000 (£165,000).

PLO vote paves way for talks on final status

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

THE Palestine Liberation Organisation's revocation of the core of its founding covenant has opened the way for crucial talks with Israel to open at the end of next week on the future of Palestine.

Negotiations on a so-called final status agreement, due to be implemented in 1998, will cover all the most contentious issues at the heart of the Middle East's most fractious dispute: refugees, Jewish settlements, final borders and the status of Jerusalem.

But, say critics of Wednesday's changes in the PLO covenant, the Palestinians will go naked into the conference chamber, having in effect given up their claim, based on their natural majority, to control the destiny of the land between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean.

The changes in the covenant were approved, at the insistence of President Yasser Arafat, by the PLO's "parliament" the Palestine National Council (PNC). Mr Arafat insists that the outcome of the next negotiations will be a Palestinian sovereign state, with Jerusalem as its capital.

But he has also made it clear that the state he will accept will be a small, pale shadow of the Palestine envisaged by the PLO founding fathers.

Meeting for the first time since the 1967 Six Day War on Palestinian soil, the PNC session in Gaza City approved the changes by 507 votes to 54, with 14 abstentions.

The size of the majority astonished even Palestinian observers, who had predicted that Mr Arafat would struggle to achieve the two-thirds majority necessary for constitutional change. Voting was by

a show of hands, at Mr Arafat's insistence.

In the end, most of the PNC bowed to presidential pressure. Radical elements, including the Popular and Democratic fronts, boycotted the session. Individual dissidents, like the respected Gaza independent, Haider Abdel-Shafi, and human rights activist Hanan Ashrawi, voted against the changes.

The outcome of the vote is widely seen as a triumph for Mr Arafat. Though it may not increase his popularity among Palestinians, it has certainly boosted his standing among Israelis, many of whom had despaired of seeing any fundamental change in the PLO constitution.

The Israeli government was overjoyed by the news from Gaza. The prime minister, Shimon Peres, facing elections on May 29, called the decision "a very substantial change: an historic step".

The governing Labour Party responded yesterday by dropping its long-held opposition to a Palestinian state.

There is a widespread expectation in Israel that Mr Arafat will be rewarded by speedy progress towards Israel's long-delayed withdrawal from most of the West Bank city of Hebron.

High military sources, quoted in the well-informed Hebrew press, said the withdrawal could take place as early as this weekend, and be completed in 12 hours.

Israelis promised to hand over to the self-rule authority all Palestinian cities in the occupied West Bank. Only Hebron remains to be transferred, and even when it is, Israeli troops will remain in the city centre to protect 400 or so settler Jewish settlers who insist on living amid more than 100,000 Arabs.

Imran Khan enters politics

IMRAN KHAN, officially entered Pakistani politics yesterday, ending months of speculation.

The former cricket star announced the formation of the Movement for Justice at a press conference in Lahore.

"The main objective of this movement is to bring about a change in the country by demanding justice, honesty, decency and self-respect," he said. "I have entered politics because... when the country

is moving toward disaster, no one can sit on the sidelines. Analysts say Mr Khan could pose a real challenge to Benazir Bhutto's ruling Pakistan People's Party and to the opposition Muslim League.

He did not announce his new movement's platform, but he has been linked to some fundamentalist Muslim groups. Fundamentalists hope that Khan, with his Oxford education, will make their movement more acceptable - AP.

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STARTS TODAY

AND AT CINEMAS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

مكتبة من الاجل

Peace hopes fade as Dudayev's successor brands Yeltsin a criminal and vows to fight to the bitter end

Chechen leader pledges 'holy war'



David Hearst in
Rochni-Chu, Chechnya

THE new leader of the Chechen separatist cause, Aslan Maskhadov, called last night for a jihad against Russia, saying that only through war could his people achieve independence from Moscow.

Speaking in the village of Rochni-Chu, less than a mile from where his predecessor Dzhokhar Dudayev met his death this week, he vowed to continue the war to the bitter end.

Close by lay the huge crater left by the rocket which killed Dudayev and wrecked his car as he tried by satellite phone to arrange peace talks through an intermediary.

In a long monologue, the quietly spoken Mr. Maskhadov declared: "They say the Chechen people are buried. We are not buried... I will take the lead in a war, in a jihad of the Chechen people, in the name of Allah and in the name of the freedom of the Chechen people."

This sounded the death knell for the peace initiative Mr. Yeltsin launched at the beginning of the month when he promised a limited withdrawal of troops from Chechen villages which signed the peace agreement.

Mr. Maskhadov said he had been appointed by "the state committee of defence and cabinet of ministers", a formula which skirted round the rumoured misgivings of such increasingly independent war lords as Shamil

Basayev and Ruslan Gelayev. He went out of his way to brand President Yeltsin a criminal. He called the Russian state "a mafioso-like creation" and said that responsibility for the war and destruction visited on the Chechen nation lay with Mr. Yeltsin himself.

"We consider him guilty. He was guilty at the start of this war and I am convinced of that and the whole world is too."

He appeared to threaten Mr. Yeltsin's life, thus closing the door firmly on any attempts to negotiate with the Russian leadership.

Mr. Maskhadov, formerly the rebels' ideology chief, has never been known for his ability to compromise. Reactions in Grozny last night were mixed. Many

refused to believe that Dudayev was dead, and thought the whole episode an elaborate hoax. Many former fighters found fault with Mr. Maskhadov, saying he had not stayed in Grozny to organise its defence, that he was not a military man, and that he had little authority.

Nicolai Sambiyev, aged 43, said: "For me he is not an authoritative man. Basayev or Gelayev are." Others said they did not believe he would be anything other than a figurehead.

The centre of Grozny is now a desolate clearance site. The presidential palace, the symbol of Chechen resistance, is a huge pile of rubble, among which the old lamp posts still stand erect.

Silence enfolds the centre, broken only by the sharp rat-

tle of heavy machine gun fire. Russian armoured personnel carriers do not dally, even in broad daylight. One fired a salvo into the air at a road junction to warn other cars to get out of the way. The new masters of Grozny shoot first and ask questions later.

An outraged Chechen market trader said: "They even shoot off their guns in time to the music they hear on their head phones, just to inspire fear in us, so that we are in a permanent state of shock."

A woman called Rosa said: "Who is considered a bandit? A cat? A dog? A seven-year-old boy this high? There are two boys who want mushroom picking yesterday. The Russians shot at them, too, and now they are in an intensive care unit. Is that justice?"

In an open letter to the public leaked to the Bild tabloid newspaper, Mr. Kohl employed a Thatcherite tone in announcing the austerity measures, and warned of tough times ahead in a country that enjoys the highest wages and social security provision in Europe.

"Some say we can finance prosperity on credit," Mr. Kohl's letter stated. "But the state is no different from private life: we can't live above our means."

Referring to Germany's post-war record level of 4 million unemployed, Mr. Kohl said labour had priced itself out of jobs.

"If we don't act now, more jobs will be lost and we will be no longer able to finance our welfare state."

In a speech to parliament today, the chancellor is to disclose what is being touted as a blueprint for economic recovery, job creation and growth. His priority is to get public finances in order since

soaring unemployment, decreased tax revenues and increased dole payments mean that without cuts the government will fail to pass the single European currency tests on budget deficit and public debt in 1997.

The broader aim is to get the economy moving by curbing the high non-wage costs of industry, and tax reform. The measures will include reductions of at least 20 per cent in sick pay, trimming of pensions, raising of the retirement age for women, and moves to make it easier for small firms to sack workers.

The government is also seeking to impose a pay freeze in the public sector. But negotiations on next year's pay round for 3.2 million public employees opened yesterday in Stuttgart with unions demanding 4.5 per cent rises.

The interior minister, Manfred Kanther, declared that the kitty was empty and that any rises would have to be funded from borrowing. "Saving is the commandment of the hour," he said.

Union leaders vowed to resist the moves away from the traditional German consensus model of corporate capitalism towards American or British "pure capitalism".

The opposition Social Democrats accused the government of moving to dismantle the welfare state, rather than tackling unemployment.

But Wolfgang Schäuble, a close ally of Mr. Kohl and the Christian Democrats' parliamentary leader, dismissed such talk as scaremongering.

"We've surrounded ourselves with a web of state-decreed welfare that is a straitjacket on motivation, self-responsibility and initiative," Mr. Schäuble said. "The web is threatening to rip."

Unions angry at Kohl's plan to slash spending

San Traynor in Bonn

GERMANY'S chancellor, Helmut Kohl, warning his country that it is living beyond its means, yesterday pushed ahead with controversial public spending and welfare cuts which threaten to trigger a confrontation with the powerful trade union movement.

Following the collapse of talks he held earlier in the week with the unions and employers' leaders, Mr. Kohl sought to bypass mounting opposition by appealing directly to the public to support austerity measures intended to make Germany fit for a single European currency, rein in growing deficit spending and ease conditions for industry.

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Gallic emotion... An animated president, Jacques Chirac, reacts to being surrounded by well wishers in Amiens, northern France, during a visit yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: MICHEL SPINGLER

Red centre of Italy rejoices in Prodi's bella vittoria

John Hooper in Bologna discovers the blend of socialism and Catholicism that lies behind the new governing alliance

SHELTERED from the rain in the colonnade on Via dell'Indipendenza, the Fascist band of Bologna is belting out the old partisan anthem, *Bella Ciao*. It is Liberation Day, Italy's pre-eminent leftwing festival, in the week of the first leftwing victory in a half-century of restored democracy. *Bella Ciao* is greeted by a sustained burst of applause. Round the corner in the Piazza Maggiore under a sky the colour of pumice, they are preparing to lay wreaths at the city's

war memorial. Antonietta Negretti has come with her friend whose father was a partisan. She is overjoyed with what she calls a "*bella vittoria*". Run by communists and their heirs ever since the war, Bologna is Italy's "reddest" city. The main road to the centre from the ring road is called *Via Stalingrado*. It is also the town with which Professor Romano Prodi, the centre-left's candidate for the premiership, is most closely associated. It was not where he was born, but where until recently he lived, taught and prayed. "Just down there, at St Stephen's," said a pensioner gesturing with his umbrella. "Prodi and the parish priest, they're great friends. He used to take communion there every Sunday." Coming to Bologna makes a lot of things about Prof Prodi and the alliance he leads fall into place. From a distance, he seems like the captain of a motley crew — former communists mixed with devout, though progressive, former Christian Democrats like himself. Here, the two traditions co-exist more vigorously than perhaps anywhere in Italy. While for "red" Bologna April 25 was an opportunity to commemorate the

Resistance, across the square at the basilica of St Petronius, it was a chance for "Catholic" Bologna to hold a convention of the Prayer Groups of Padre Pio, the 20th-century Capuchin mystic. Such is the strength of these two apparently contradictory forces, you can see them fusing before your eyes. Yesterday's Resistance commemorations began with a mass — at St Stephen's. It becomes entirely comprehensible that an adoptive son of Bologna should feel able to represent both sets of ideals in government. What helps them to co-exist in Bologna is prosperity. It is often held up as a show-case for leftwing administration. Gleaming buses glide over the cobbles between covered stops with electronic display boards telling passengers when the next service is due. None of this, though, would be possible without the prosperity generated by the city's Piazza Maggiore, thought he would be "especially good for the economy". She hoped that a centre-left government would make it easier for her daughter, who is due to leave school this year, to get a job. She was also counting on it to put an end to cuts in the pension system begun two years ago by the conservative administration of Silvio Berlusconi. On the other side of the square, Italo Bizzini, the head of the quality control unit at a local firm, also thought that Prof Prodi could help boost the economy. "But in any case, it was time for a change. All we've had for 50 years have been adjustments this way and that. I think we Italians have been, well, a bit too static."

News in brief

'No evidence found' to link Spain's PM to death squads

SPAIN'S Supreme Court investigator has found no evidence linking the outgoing prime minister, Felipe Gonzalez, to charges related to a "dirty war" against Basque separatists in the 1980s, court sources said yesterday. The court would not request parliamentary permission for Mr. Gonzalez to testify and would "in all probability" issue a writ rejecting the complaints against him. A report by the prosecutor investigating accusations that Mr. Gonzalez's Socialist government ran death squads targeting rebels showed there was no proof he was involved, they added. A disgruntled former Socialist Party leader in the Basque region had accused Mr. Gonzalez and other high officials of conspiring to operate the squads. "The scandal forced Mr. Gonzalez to call an early election, which he lost — Reuters.

Rebel's lesson in betrayal

Paraguay's President Juan Carlos Wasmosy, bowing to public and political pressure, announced yesterday he will not fulfil his promise to make his rebellious army chief defence minister. "The people's will takes precedence over any commitment I may have undertaken," President Wasmosy said, referring to the popular outrage at his earlier offer. "That is why I have resolved to sacrifice my commitment, with all the consequences this may have, and... not designate General [Lino] Oviedo defence minister." — Reuters.

Anniversary reminder for Chernobyl

CHERNOBYL nuclear power station suffered a minor release of radioactivity on Wednesday night, just short of the 10th anniversary of the world's worst nuclear accident. The impasse in negotiations on the constitution, which has to be agreed by May 9, appeared to contribute to panic on the financial markets yesterday which saw a record fall in the rand's value. No one was sure why the currency weakened so rapidly to close the day at 4.430 to the dollar — a drop of 4 per cent from Wednesday's close. The constitutional assembly — effectively a joint sitting of the two houses of parliament — began voting on the new constitution late on Wednesday night. In terms of the interim constitution under which South Africa has been governed since 1994, the final constitution has to be agreed by May 9, or a referendum could be forced. — Agencies.

What is striking about the SAS phenomenon is that it is equally available to left and right. LWT's film of The One That Got Away was made by Paul Greengrass, who was associated with both the TV and book versions of Spycatcher.
John Daggdale

Review cover story

South African constitution threatened by deadlock

David Bernesford in Johannesburg

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela and his predecessor, F. W. de Klerk, are expected to hold urgent talks this weekend in an attempt to break a deadlock which threatens the adoption of South Africa's final constitution. The impasse in negotiations on the constitution, which has to be agreed by May 9, appeared to contribute to panic on the financial markets yesterday which saw a record fall in the rand's value. No one was sure why the currency weakened so rapidly to close the day at 4.430 to the dollar — a drop of 4 per cent from Wednesday's close. The constitutional assembly — effectively a joint sitting of the two houses of parliament — began voting on the new constitution late on Wednesday night. In terms of the interim constitution under which South Africa has been governed since 1994, the final constitution has to be agreed by May 9, or a referendum could be forced. — Agencies.

Parties yesterday tabled more than 300 amendments to the legislation, but the most serious deadlocks are between Mr. Mandela's ANC and its coalition partners, Mr. de Klerk's National Party.

The nationalists are fighting for the insertion of a right of lockout — as a counter to labour's right to strike — and provision for single-language education. The ANC opposes the education clause on the grounds it will facilitate racially-exclusive schools. The major trade union federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions has called for a one-day general strike on Tuesday as a demonstration of popular opposition to a lockout clause. The ANC has been criticised for supporting the call. The other major proposed change is the replacement of the senate by a 90-strong national council of provinces, its members nominated by regional legislatures. The ANC and the National Party, which together can deliver the two-thirds majority needed to pass a new constitution, have been criticised for negotiating in private.

Think about the children
One thing worse than divorce is a dire marriage

RARELY can the Commons have heard so much hubbub as in Wednesday night's divorce debate. Spurious platitudes were piously piled on specious truisms in a fraudulent attempt to demonstrate family values. Research, hard evidence and expert advice were all ignored by the back-to-basics band who naively believe human behaviour can be changed by parliament.

produced a sane and sensible discussion package, which was republished in 1990 in a refined form. Government white papers and consultative documents followed. This was no gimcrack, knee-jerk bill which Michael Howard is so fond of producing. Perhaps that is why he joined the opponents on Wednesday. The debate over the length of the waiting period typifies the superficial arguments of opponents. Children do not distinguish between separation and divorce. Life for Fergie's children after this month's decree nisi is no different from last month.

The East Asian power game

Sino-Soviet harmony will endure: if grievances are ignored

A BRAND new strategic partnership was announced yesterday in Beijing by Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Jiang Zemin. It inaugurates a "new age" for the 21st century. Mr Yeltsin pined on the hype by insisting that "I can't name a single question on which we (Russia and China) would have different opinions".

China to calculate and calibrate their strategies in this four-sided contest. It is not really such a coincidence, then, that Mr Yeltsin and Mr Jiang should have proclaimed their own new partnership just days after Mr Clinton and Mr Hashimoto affirmed theirs.

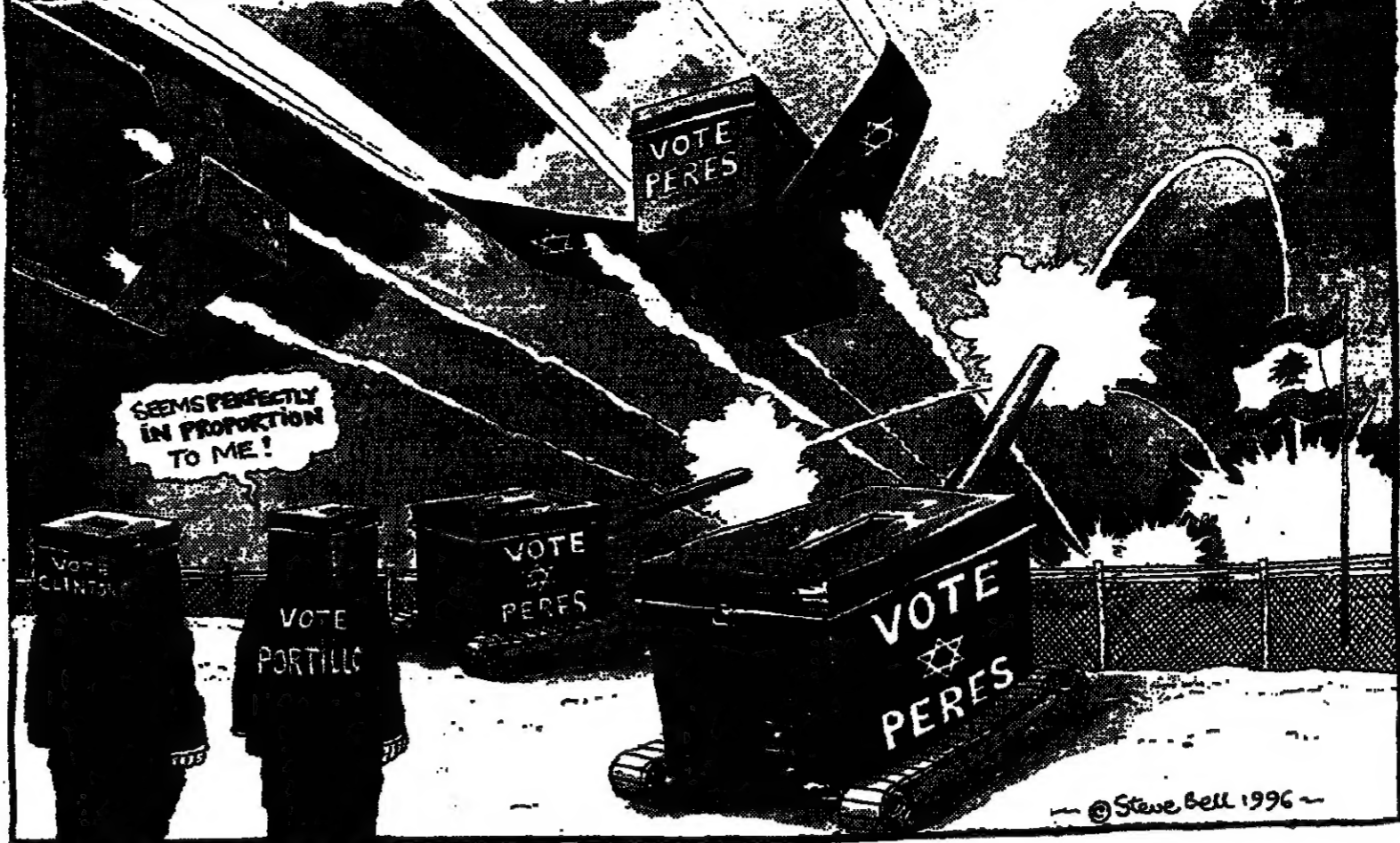
Transport policy going nowhere

It must be special to have upset road lobbies and the greens

YESTERDAY'S transport green paper will wither on the shelf (probably turning really green in the process) while politicians fret about the election. Which is just as well because the proposals are so vague — and with no new resources to back them up — that it would be tough to discern whether they had been implemented or not.

great: except that the Government is hiving off the responsibility to local authorities (not hitherto among its heroes) while denying them the means. Another theme — better planning of transport infrastructure — will be achieved through "integrating more closely the regional land use planning system with the planning of trunk roads" (well, that will show them).

KEEPING THE WORLD SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY



Letters to the Editor

Emergency in the wards

WE produce 4,000 new doctors in the UK each year, enough to staff our NHS hospitals and general practices (Doctors' sub-hospital jobs, April 23). It is tragic this government has made working conditions and salaries so unattractive that over 30 per cent reject a career in the NHS.

Many NHS trusts are seducing doctors and nurses from Third World countries, who spend precious resources on training their doctors only to find they are stolen by a wealthier country. This happened in the 1980s when large numbers of doctors came here from India, and now we are doing it again.

Without changing those structures and processes, it is almost impossible for efficient trusts to find where additional cuts could be made without losing their efficiency. Jacqueline Filkins, Chair, Nurse Executive Forum, Royal College of Nursing, 20 Cavendish Square, London W1M 0AB.

A sour taste of beef, with the Government getting roasted

WE HEAR, on very good authority, that a policy is about to be announced for "reduced national beef herd" (OK offers Europe limited cut-throat slaughter, April 25). Have we missed the point? The incidence of BSE is largely a problem in the dairy herd (over 90 per cent of herds have had a case).

FIRST the Government creates a new definition of the word "safe". Then it behaves as if we still live in a world in which we can send the gunboats out to subdue the natives. Foreign consumers will simply never buy British beef again, no matter what their governments tell them they must do.

FILLING vacant consultant posts is proving to be a major problem. The immediate reason is a very significant expansion of the consultant grade in the past five years.

THE arbitrary cuts of five per cent of management posts (Nurses lose jobs in cull of bureaucrats, April 25) are a great burden on trusts which are already efficient and have cut management posts. Contract negotiations, which include quality standards for patient care, require much attention, and mechanisms for reporting the achievement of targets must be at times elaborate.

Spare the child

WE, mostly teachers and parents, are greatly dismayed by the case of Richard Wilding (Strike over violent pupil, April 25). Although we completely agree that bad behaviour in classrooms is unacceptable, we do not believe that the job of a trade union was to gang up on one child and his parents.



Morris dancers take the floor

MODERN Morris dancing at its best is an exciting, entertaining, creative and contemporary art form. Why then, whenever the Guardian refers to Morris, does it unearth the self-delusions of reactionary dinosaurs?

THERE is concern that Morris dancing is becoming a 40-something activity, with few younger people coming in (Bell tells for Morris dancers as plea for new blood falls on stony ground, April 23). The bulge of people who took up dancing 20 years ago in the revival are now getting progressively older.

Barclays' policy on interest

THE article about my brother and me (Lords of the island, April 23) was published unethically and created misleading impressions. It conspicuously failed to highlight the important fact that John Sweeney and I are waging a campaign against the Guardian Media Group, as owner of the Observer newspaper, are interested as defendants in the proceedings mentioned in the article.

article and your sister newspaper were actively engaged in the litigation described in the article, your readers would have understood perhaps why the article was so clearly slanted against us. A good example of this is the misleading reference to our interest in a company which has a small share in an investment fund, part of whose portfolio includes the National Enquirer. This detail was lifted from our complaint to the BBC without explaining, as the full complaint makes clear, that my brother and I have absolutely no control whatsoever over the National Enquirer, let alone any of its articles.

A Country Diary

GLoucestershire: With an Easter weekend household of excited little grandchildren all eager to see and celebrate the birth of a lamb, our flock of Herdwicks exercised their well-known talent for drama and irony and waited until all the family had departed, disappointed, before the first ewe lambbed. And it was Hermione who came first. Little Tallulah was borne, without trouble, the day after the family had gone their various ways, and we drew breath and waited developments.

expensive veterinary interventions proved necessary. Firstly we had the traumatic birth of a ewe lamb to Bess, a first-time lamber at two years old, who was so tight that a caesarian section seemed to be the looming option. That was avoided but the pain and stress of the birth meant that she did not, for over a day, recognise her lamb. We had just about cracked that problem with close confinement and enhanced recognition strategies when, at lunchtime on Sunday, poor old Puffball — a dependable ewe who has lambed many times before, showed clear evidence of incipient problems. A veterinary consultation identified the problem — a breeches presentation of the first of twin ewe lambs — competently extracted by two young vets and now flourishing. It delayed Sunday lunch but we raised a glass to Puffball and her new lambs as they tottered out into the warm spring sunshine. Meanwhile, other ewes quietly got on with it as nature intended.

Law is found guilty of sexism

THE President of the Law Society's denial that women face discrimination in the legal profession (Maverick solicitors' leader lays down law to women on sex discrimination, April 22) offers further confirmation of just how out of touch he is.

THE 23 Lord Justices of Appeal appointed in the last five years, none were women. Of the 64 High Court judges and 247 Circuit Judges appointed since 1991, only six and 20 respectively were women. It is precisely because there are so few women in positions of responsibility in our courts that women continue to receive unacceptable treatment at the hands of the legal service. Victims of rape are often made to feel it is they who are standing trial.

Handwritten Arabic text: صلا من الامم

Diary
Joanna Coles

My friend Stephen Glover becomes more modest with each minute. This week he has been enthralled by Spectator readers with his lofty thoughts on editors' salaries. "How much is an editor worth?" he ponders, crumpling the top of his Bic. Before raking his inguinal creases and eyebrows at the ever-widening gap between editors' salaries and those of the humble hack. For good measure Glover tosses in a few examples: Max Hastings totted up £583,000 last year, as editor of the Daily Telegraph, while Paul Dacre at the Mail lugged home £500,000 and Charlie "Gorbals" Wilson squandered away £293,000. "In many cases I certainly do not begrudge them," Glover murmurs grandly. "How could I, having made some money out of journalism?" How indeed. As a co-founder of the Independent, Glover sold his shares for at least £600,000; on top of that he's recently raked in two lots of redondo (a year's salary twice) and a smart Mercedes to rev up outside his lovely Oxfordshire home. Such coyness is only to his credit.

I AM intrigued by a tempting conference on offer from the PM's mandarins: Burson-Marsteller. For a mere £252 per head, they promise the chance to sign up for a "Major One-Day Policy Conference on the Impact of Labour on Business, Industry and the City". Oddly — bearing in mind this is about the impact of the Labour Party — only one out of 14 speakers advertised actually turns out to be associated with the Labour Party. Still, as the brochure assures me, "John Cole is a 'senior Labour consultant'". Indeed he is. He was once assistant regional organiser for the London Labour party 1988-92. How much closer to the leadership can you get?

I AM enchanted to hear that far from being discouraged by the stuffy protests which accompanied the first screening of its series *The Underworld* about the criminal tendency — BBC1 is planning to show it again. You will remember such stuffy characters as "Mad Frankie" Fraser, "Taters" Chatham (who stealthily broke into the V&A to steal Wellington's sword) and Peter "Gentleman Thief" Scott, whose *Memoirs of a Cat Burglar* has already been tipped as a future Booker winner. Previous viewers, however, may puzzle over the fact that the repeat is shorter and, mysteriously, several of the other cuddlier characters are missing altogether. After investigation, I discover why. They are currently awaiting trial for fresh crimes.

MEANWHILE I'm relieved that Terry Major-Ball has sufficiently recovered from his jet-lag to recount in detail his work schedule from the Melbourne Flower Show. On Friday he was lucky enough to visit the home of Keith Dunstan, one of Australia's most distinguished columnists, who now runs a winery. "I'm happy to say he's a fan of my book *Major*," Terry tells me chatily. "Interestingly for me I see from his autobiography, *No Brains At All*, when he came to England in 1953 to cover the Coronation, he and his wife Jean lived in Wellington just down the road from me! Later I appeared on a variety show called *Hey Hey!* It's Saturday! I must confess I enjoy doing TV shows — maybe it's my showbiz genes." Quite possibly, Terry. Quite possibly.

I'M glad to see a brief resurgence of the Blitz spirit in Hammer-smith on Wednesday night. As Paul Hancock, who lives in the row of houses closest to the bomb site, commented to the Press Association: "I heard a bang. I looked at my wife and we raised our eyebrows."

MY Hollywood friend, the actor Nick Nolte, is safely out of hospital after having his sciatica snipped. "I've had these 'lightning bolts' he tells me cheerfully. "I don't find nude scenes difficult but my testicles just hung so low. Once you're over 50 everything seems delicate." Indeed it does, Nick. Indeed, it does.



Harlots come out to play again

Commentary Peter Preston

SCHELDOM in history have so few owed so much to so many. The Euro-sceptics, long on noise and short on numbers, are hugging themselves as the leader writes the column inches. From the Sun to say No to an "Orwellian super state". Join the Daily Express in kicking "messing, bullying Helmut Kohl" where it hurts. Stand firm with the Daily Telegraph against an "irrevocable act of national betrayal". Heaven bless Jimmy Goldsmith. And don't forget to put the cat out.

ing footsie with Sir James, putting the boot into the "dissenter" that is Johnny. How sentiment, how formidable, how deeply indicative. "Can you ever remember such a line up?" asks an ecstatic sceptic. Actually, yes. Or rather I am reminded of one by a couple of highly entertaining books of newspaper history-making out this week. One is Tickle *The Public* from your very own Matthew Edge. The other is *The Great Outsiders* by SJ Taylor, a refreshingly jaunty biography of the first Lords Northcliffe and Rothermere timed to celebrate 100 years of the Daily Mail — and recently serialised by that proud organ with the trailer "Continuing the story of the Men who made the Mail, Pages 56-57".

The story itself was inevitably a touch selective. It found the Great Outsiders by mention the United Empire Party. Let me (with help from Engel and Taylor) fill you in. As the 20s turned, Lord Beaverbrook, a rich, ambitious ego with a head charm, held Stanley Baldwin in rare contempt. Baldwin was an ordinary bloke as Tory leaders went as ordinary as, well, John Major. Beaverbrook and his unlikely mate Rothermere, kings of the Express, Mail and much else besides, got together.

slide". In a world where "people often didn't know what to believe — here was something".

One acrid sentence burst the balloon of self-importance and mischief and rampant ambition

nervelessly tottering on the brink of resignation. The Mail launched a killer strike on his betrayal of his old dad. And then? Then Baldwin, with a little help from Rudyard Kipling, made a by-election speech which ended with almost the exact words of his anybody business: "What the proprietors of these papers is aiming at is power, and power without responsibility — the prerogative of the harlot throughout the ages".

the balloon of self-importance and mischief and rampant ambition.

My new role as Clare Short's minder



Bel Littlejohn

THERE'S one thing we can all agree on. She's a lovely lady. A truly lovely, lovely lady. One of the loveliest ladies in modern politics. With her Brummie wit and rough-and-ready Brummie charm, Clare Short doesn't have an enemy in the House, except for those who can't stand her. But she's got to learn that being lovely isn't everything when it comes to winning elections. To put it kindly, I sometimes wish she'd take more notice of that timely catchphrase, first coined by the late, great Nye Bevan: "Why don't you just shut your big fat gob?"

the house". But Clare isn't having any of it. She wants to charge him double. "Any road up, it can afford it, can't it?" she exclaims in her lovely Brummie accent. At this point, the Home Secretary, who has overheard their negotiations, steps into the debate. "I'm sure we can arrive at some reasonable compromise," he purrs. Vera then reminds them both of the principles of collective responsibility. Clare, she maintains, has spoken out of turn. Clare stands corrected. The Home Secretary leaves without paying a penny and Vera re-establishes her authority. At this, Clare exits in a huff, just as Benny — played by the struggling young actor John Prescott — enters wearing his familiar woolly hat. "Blimey, everything's so tight here," he asks. Vera explains the position. "Well in my opinion," concludes Benny with a shake of his head, "you come to a collective agreement about something, you have a responsibility in its way, and it's remained in my mind ever since. Who'd've thought that, 21 years later, the very same couple — John and Clare — both of them having left Crossroads Motel so many moons ago and both now occupying senior positions at the heart of New Labour, should once again come to blows in such similar circumstances?"



Losing their grip

The Government is staggering from one crisis to another under the weak leadership of John Major, argues Michael White. Things can't go on like this

IT IS not often that Sir George Gardiner, Tory MP for Reigate, speaks for the nation. But in this week's edition of the Surrey Mirror, the Thinking Plotters' Plotter observes, without apparent irony, "Some of these people must have a death wish."

Sir George was referring to Tories in his constituency who are trying to deselect him for excessive Euro-scepticism and other thought crimes. But he could have been talking about any number of colleagues at Westminster in assorted permutations. It was rightwing pro-family Tories who engineered Wednesday night's defeat on the divorce bill, which ministers ineptly tried to shrug off yesterday — that is, those ministers who did not actu-

ally vote for the defeat (34 of them, four of cabinet rank, plus 121 backbenchers). It was also rightwingers who staged a publicity coup for Iain Duncan-Smith's token bid to tame the powers of the European Court of Justice. Defeated by 83 votes to 77, mainly Tory and Unionist votes, the event was of marginal symbolic importance. Yet it led Wednesday's Times and Telegraph.

By the same token, it was the leftish Ken Clarke who predicted that Starts SE would be the by-election which restored the feel-good factor, and leftish Stephen Dorrell and Michael Heseltine who raised expectation of "retaliatory" steps against Europe over the beef ban, only to climb down when the lawyers said it might be tricky. At

alist, that is. Why? For several reasons, of which Mr Duncan-Smith's 10-minute rant is only one element. Sir James Goldsmith, rich, reactionary and magnificently irresponsible, set up camp at the Dorchester to woo opinion-formers and wreck the cohesion of the party. John Redwood duly paid a wary call. Meanwhile the ailing Daily Express finally succumbed to MJD, that myopic form of Mad Journalism Disease, which means the pro-Europeans can expect no more column inches there than they get in the rest of the Tory pack. "Will the Sun back Blair at the election?" is now a question on MP's lips. None of which need matter decisively if what remains of the Government showed any sign of firmness of purpose. Alas for Mr Major, it has never been his strong suit. The muddling of the divorce bill is a classic case in point. Tory MPs were outraged by Tony Blair's cheap point-scoring at Question Time yesterday. "It was a free vote. How can that be a defeat for the Government?" ask ministers. Quite easily, actually. Yes, Mr Major signalled a free vote on the bill's "matters of conscience" last November, though the difference between a waiting period of 12 or 18 months is hardly one of profound principle. Besides, the Government's bill which 34 ministers opposed.

£10 BUYS A CHAIN CUTTER

He's chained up through his sensitive nose and made to walk on red hot plates, whilst the back of his legs are left in time to music. Onlookers tempt him and force him to drink beer. Why? Because they're teasing him to "dance" for tourists who pay to watch his agonising waltz.

The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) rescues 'dancing bears' and other animals where they can be free of pain and suffering. But we can't carry out our life-saving work without the support of people like you. Your gift of just £10, or whatever you can afford, will help cut the chains of innocent animals. So please send your donation today. He's counting on you.

YES, I WANT TO CUT THE CHAINS!

Please fill in the details below

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Here is my donation of £ _____ (Please make cheques payable to WSPA or complete the credit card details below)

Account/Visa/Mastercard/Amex/Discover/CAF/CharityCard (please state as appropriate)

Card No. (if using this, please state details) _____

Exp. date _____

Signature _____

Please send this completed form and your donation to: WSPA, Dept AL19, Ferguson House, Northampton, NN3 6ER. No stamp is needed. THANK YOU. Registered Charity No. 282928

World Society for the Protection of Animals

General Tran Van Tra

Danger man of Vietnam

GENERAL Tran Van Tra, who has died in Ho Chi Minh City aged 77, was the commander of the victorious communist army in the southern half of South Vietnam during the spring of 1975. He was a brilliant military leader, the equal of the far-better known Vo Nguyen Giap, who led the successful war against the French and is generally considered one of the century's great generals.



Nonconformist leader... Tra's history of the war was locked up by the authorities

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THE REMAINING manuscript has never been printed.

But Tra's prestige among many older communists, especially in the army, grew even larger, not the least because General Dung's many critics within the military were eager to set the record straight.

Tra's next conflict with the official Party came when he became the best-known leader of over 100 retired senior officers and Party leaders who formed an unauthorised veterans' organisation in 1987.

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Sir William Wilkinson

Conservation with passion

WILLIAM Wilkinson, who has died aged 63, had a distinguished career in business but his real passion lay in the enjoyment and conservation of nature.

As Chairman of the Nature Conservancy Council during the 1960s, he set the agenda for reversing 30 years of environmental despoliation in this country.

When the NCC was disbanded after a political coup by Nicholas Ridley, then Secretary of State for the Environment, Wilkinson continued his struggle to save Britain's natural heritage by working in the voluntary sector.

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tish workers the right to jobs in forestry. For once Wilkinson failed to negotiate a compromise. In July 1969 Nicholas Ridley, who had long believed that nature conservation was best left to private landowners, announced the division of the NCC into separate agencies for England, Scotland and Wales. Wilkinson, bitterly opposed to the decision, was not consulted.

After his protests, the proposal was modified and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee was set up under an independent chairman to co-ordinate data collection and international responsibilities for nature conservation.

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Letter

Bryan Baxter writes... meant the truncation of my obituary notice on David Shipman (April 24), especially references to his major history of the cinema and his book celebrating its centenary.

François-Régis Bastide

France's ambassador of culture

FRANÇOIS-RÉGIS Bastide, who has died aged 69, was famous in France for his radio programme *Le Masque et la Plume*.

Shortly afterwards he began his work with French radio, when he wrote an adaptation of Flaubert's *Education Sentimentale* before moving on to *Le Masque et la Plume*.

... the same time he began to interest himself in French socialism, not so much via the official party as by those who were on the fringes.

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Birthdays

- John Battle, Labour MP, 45; Carol Burnett, actress, comedienne and singer, 60; Charlie Chester, comedian, 82; David Coleman, sports commentator, 70; Jack Douglas, actor and comedian, 68; Sir Gordon Downey, party journalist, 68; Stuart Higgins, editor of the Sun, 40; Sir James Holt, medieval historian, 74; Dr Lynne Jones, Labour MP, 45; Dr Anne McLaren, biologist, 69; Prof Wilfrid Mellers, composer, 69; Sir Peter Mountbatten, former Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, 73; Peter Schaufuss, director of ballet, Deutsche Oper, Berlin, 48; Dame Margaret Scott, founding director, Australian School of Kathakali (Koo) Stark, actress, photographer, 48; Roger Taylor, rock drummer, 38; Andrea Temesvari, tennis player, 30; Dr Ian Twinn, Conservative MP, 48; Derek Warburton, actor, 66; Morris West, novelist, 80.

Jackdaw

... Was this attractive? "No, not at all. But he also has a charming side. He's a bit of a split personality. It's a constant challenge being with David. No day is the same. He has all these different moods."

The 'N' word

Black Americans have been telling *The New Yorker* about use of the word "nigger", or its more acceptable relative, "nigga".

Ad nauseam

LORNA Russell in *Everywoman* has been taking a close look at television advertising:

Seen it

Newspaper people love these movie scenes where the presses roll and an oversexed copy of a paper from the presses, so a headline such as KILLER STALKS CHICAGO STREETS can be read. Bob Thomas, for many years Hollywood correspondent of *The Associated Press*, has been telling readers of *The International Herald Tribune* about more up-to-date film clichés.

Novel's wake

George Steiner is worrying about the novel. In *Prospect* we are getting very tired in our novel writing; that makes perfect sense, there is nothing

Home front

Bente Hogh lives with David Irving, the historian who has his own special slant on Hitler and the Holocaust. Bente doesn't agree with David's views but she is the mother of his child. She told Nicholas Farrell of *The Spectator* about living with David.

Jackdaw

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سكنا من الالهي

Advertisement for 'The Dragon' featuring a dragon illustration and text: 'The Dragon offer', 'Barburg li', 'nares sal', 'crutiny'.

Friday April 26 1996

Model of a modern motor company, page 12
Tomorrow: The art of selling memorabilia

Pirc raises gas pressure, page 12
Plus: Italy's ERM gamble

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

Those who know their onions hit out at the EU

Nadja Rybarova in Prague

IN A CRY for help at being sliced out of their own business, Czech farmers yesterday dumped three tonnes of onions on the agriculture ministry steps. Farmers are faced with throwing away about 20,000 tonnes of onions this year as their home-grown produce is priced out of the Czech market by inferior imports from European Union countries, according to Josef Krizek, an opposition Czech-Moravian Union MP.



Sterling at seven-month record • High street sales edge upward • Pressure on for interest rate cut

Soaring pound aids Clarke

Richard Thomas
Economics Correspondent

STERLING hit a seven-month high on the foreign exchange yesterday, fuelling hopes that the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, would cut interest rates to keep the economy on the boil.

strengthening pound would give Mr Clarke the ammunition he needs to overrule the Bank of England — which has been concerned about the inflationary implications of a weak currency — and cut base rates from the present 6 per cent.

Dealers, initially wrong-footed by the worse-than-expected data, were soon distracted by comments from Bundesbank council member Franz-Christoph Zeidler, which sparked speculation that last week's reduction could mark the start of aggressive policy easing by Germany's central bank.

Jonathan Lyons, UK economist at HSBC Markets, said: "Consumers are returning to the high street — but the economy still needs rate cuts, and industry needs them desperately."

the Bank of England. Eddie George, on May 8, if gross-domestic-product figures for the first three months of the year — out on Monday — are weak.

Although City analysts noted that the sales figures continued to show an increase, the slowdown in the rate of improvement — combined with evidence of a stagnating manufacturing sector — made an interest rate cut more likely.

Warburg in shares sale scrutiny

Patrick Donovan,
Paul Murphy and Ian King

CONTROVERSY last night surrounded the £2.1 billion Rentokil bid for BET on the eve of its closing deadline as the Takeover Panel attempted to decide whether one of the predator's key financial advisers, SBC Warburg, had broken market rules over a "backdoor" share sale.

This states that any "market maker connected with an offeror or the offeree company (during a takeover bid) must not carry out any dealings with the offeree or the offeree company as the case may be."

PowerGen threatens retaliation after Lang's takeover blackball

Chris Barrie

POWERGEN was embroiled in a furious public row with the Government last night when it emerged that the electricity generator may force a Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry into the entire industry by dropping an undertaking to foster competition by disposing of two power stations.

But National Power, its larger rival, said yesterday that it would sell 4,000 megawatts of plant to Eastern as planned.

Industry sources suggested that an MMC inquiry would have to be widened to include all generators, damaging the Government's July privatisation of nuclear power.

PowerGen is understood to feel that it has little to lose from an MMC inquiry, given that the panel cleared the generators' takeovers, only to be overruled by Mr Lang.

Enter the Dragon offer

As the handover to Chinese rule in Hong Kong approaches, the Guardian Finance team's comprehensive reports on the prospects for the colony are now available in booklet form for £2.50, including postage and packing.

Job with a big future

Don't be fooled by the quiet start, Dan Atkinson tells tunnel debt manager

EASY TO earn £25,000 a year backed yesterday for anyone with a smattering of French and some experience of foreign-currency borrowing — Eurotunnel is advertising for a "debt manager."

fering creditors will expect repayments to resume at some point, and the job description notes ominously that the appointee will have to play "a key part" in "implementation of the future borrowing structure."

NatWest Bank in third run-in with regulators

Dan Atkinson

NATWEST suffered its third run-in with City regulators in less than a year when Inuro fined the bank £75,000 for administrative failures relating to personal equity plans (PEPs).

Fire-prone switch forces Ford to recall 8.7m vehicles

Mark Tran in New York

FORD Motor Company faces a bill of up to \$70 million (£57 million) as America's second-largest car maker moves to replace ignition switches in 8.7 million cars and trucks.

way Traffic Safety Administration. Ford said that the cost of replacing the switches, which may short-circuit and catch fire — even when the engine is switched off — is estimated to be about \$100 per vehicle.

It added, however, that the actual cost could be as little as \$300 million because some of the cars involved may no longer be on the road and some customers may opt not to bring in their cars.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1.95	France 7.32	Italy 2.304	Singapore 2.08
Austria 15.51	Germany 2.250	Malta 0.250	South Africa 2.28
Belgium 33.15	Greece 33.15	Netherlands 2.5050	Spain 182.25
Canada 2.01	Hong Kong 11.25	New Zealand 2.1550	Sweden 10.05
Cyprus 0.7050	India 61.65	Norway 9.05	Switzerland 1.80
Denmark 6.58	Ireland 0.94	Portugal 228.75	Turkey 107.536
Finland 1.2375	Israel 4.80	Saudi Arabia 5.84	USA 1.4750



12 FINANCE AND ECONOMICS

ICI expects to paint its profits out of a corner

Roger Cowie

CHEMICAL giant ICI yesterday tried to play down poor first quarter results by predicting that the industry's cycle was already on the rise again. The company's optimism failed to impress investors, who drove down the share price by 28p to 326p, reversing gains on the previous day. "Although this year's profitability began in line with 1995, March did not match last year when the chemical industry enjoyed particularly robust demand and firmer prices," said Sir Ronnie Hampel, the chairman. He reported first quarter pre-tax profit of £202 million, down from £221 million a year ago, before taking account of exceptional costs. The comparison was made worse by strong figures last time from the cyclical upturn of the first half of 1995, but City analysts were still disappointed at the figures and at the continued absence of a plan to boost the share price with a buy-back. Finance director Alan Spall dismissed the idea of a buy-back, although it has been seriously considered. "The whole thing was a storm in a tea cup," he said. "It was one of a series of options. We continue to look at a series of options." He added that the group was still interested in further acquisitions, on the lines of the additions made this year to its paint empire. And he was optimistic about the rest of the year. "We are taking a view that the second half of the year will feel a lot more warm in terms of levels of trading activity, particularly in markets closer to the consumer."

second half of the year consumer confidence in the UK and in parts of Europe will pick up. We are quite confident that profits will start to deliver in the second half. Mr Spall said ICI expects chemical growth in developed countries to be about 2 per cent in 1996, compared to 3 per cent in 1995. ICI sales rose by 4 per cent in the quarter to £2.6 billion. This was due to higher prices for some products, a sales boost from acquisitions and beneficial currency effects. The volume of sales fell, however. Volumes dropped 9 per cent in Europe and 3 per cent in North and South America. In Asia and the UK volumes rose. The firm's paints division had a flat quarter and posted a trading profit of £14 million. The industry has been beset by poor consumer confidence and bad weather in the United States. In the firm's explosives arm, trading profit dropped to £2 million from £11 million mainly due to difficult markets and legal problems in the US, where one business was fined for the pricing policy of its previous owners. ICI's results come amid falling earnings from other world chemical makers. Dupont yesterday said first-quarter earnings fell 6.3 per cent to \$89 million (£55 million). The biggest US chemical maker, it said revenue rose 2.8 per cent to \$1.1 billion. ICI said it was continuing a cost-cutting program started last year, but had reduced staffing levels by 800. A year ago, it said plans were to deliver £400 million in profit improvement by the end of 1997. David Ingles, analyst at HSBC James Capel, cut his 1996 profit forecast to £900 million from £950 million, and his 1997 estimate to £1,050 million from £1,150 million. Mr Ingles retained his "sell" recommendation on the stock.



Smoke of battle... Martin Broughton, left, and Lord Cairns

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN ARBELL

Ibstock builds brick empire

Tony May

IBSTOCK ushered in a further round of job cuts in the building materials industry yesterday when it became Britain's biggest brick maker and said it was looking for large cost savings. The group, which bought Tarmac's kilns for £70 million in June, has agreed to buy Redland's brick business for £160 million. It gives Ibstock more than a third of the UK market, but the company said the deal would be called off if referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Ian MacLellan, the chief executive, said the two businesses were similar and some plant closures could be expected over the next two to three years. There would not be wholesale job losses in the short term and rationalisation of brickworks would have happened even without the merger. Ibstock has 20 factories in the UK compared with Redland's 17 and the groups have about 1,500 staff each. The most significant manufacturing

overlap is in the West Midlands. Colin Hope, Ibstock's chairman, underlined the need to drive down costs by issuing a profit warning. He said profits had bounced 83 per cent to £28.1 million in 1995 — the low end of analysts' forecasts — but the first half of the current year would see "considerably lower" profits and blamed a combination of slow demand for building products, bad weather in the north-east United States, and falling pulp prices. "Ibstock is to launch a two-for-three rights issue at 55p a share to raise £100 million to help finance the acquisition. Michael Foster, an analyst at Greig, Middleton & Co, said: "The acquisition makes strategic sense but they're paying an awful lot for it." He was cutting his 1996 profit forecast, ignoring the acquisition, from £27 million to £20 million and recommending that the shares be sold. For Redland, the deal will help reduce debts from £540 million to £160 million. The group sold its roof tiles business earlier this month.

Fighting tobacco-related lawsuits costs BAT £38m

Sam King

BAT Industries, the tobacco and financial services group, spent almost \$90 million (£38 million) fighting tobacco-related legal cases last year, it was disclosed yesterday. Addressing BAT's annual meeting, chairman Lord Cairns said BAT had spent \$90 million on litigation last year, of which about 90 per cent was related to BAT's financial services arm. But he said BAT had made no specific provisions in respect of the 174 tobacco-related cases it is currently fighting. Responding to a question from Pamela Furness, chief executive of the anti-smoking group ASH, Lord Cairns said the only provisions BAT had made related to its Farmers Insurance subsidiary in America. Ms Furness, who claims BAT's decision to continue fighting various lawsuits across the United States

will eventually hit its ability to pay dividends, has called for BAT shareholders to "abandon the sinking ship". But Lord Cairns insisted that where BAT had received "a balanced hearing" it had won the argument, and promised shareholders that BAT would stand firm against future claims. BAT's shares, like those of other tobacco companies, have been under pressure since the American group, Liggett's recent decision to seek settlement in a number of cases it is fighting. Earlier, Lord Cairns unleashed an outspoken attack on the anti-tobacco lobby, accusing it of creating "an atmosphere of intolerance" towards smokers. Accusing anti-smoking groups of spreading "scare stories" about passive smoking, he said they had "conjured up elaborate conspiracies" about addiction, and had even changed the definition of addiction. He told shareholders:

"They claim that smoking is as addictive as cocaine and other hard drugs. But then they also equate the pleasures gained from caffeine in coffee with cocaine. If you drink coffee every morning you are probably addicted under this new definition. "It is to protect non-smokers that smokers have been driven out of their offices and into the freezing and sweeter streets." Lord Cairns gave warning that BAT did not expect to match the level of growth it achieved in 1995, blaming competitive conditions in insurer Eagle Star's market as a particular factor. BAT shares fell 10p to 50 1/2p on the statement. Chief executive Martin Broughton said Allied Dunbar and Eagle Star were having to find new ways of selling its products on the high street, following the merger trend among building societies and banks in recent months. He said BAT had no plans to buy a building society.

Investor puts spoke in Unipart's wheel

OUTLOOK/Rising share price tempts profit-takers to sell, writes Chris Barrie

UNIPART, the car parts maker and distributor, is often cited by both main political parties as a model company with an enticing stakeholder philosophy matched by entrepreneurial verve. Yesterday the former British Leyland subsidiary, now one of Britain's biggest private companies, turned in a model set of results for the fifth year in succession. And this despite some of the most competitive trading conditions seen in the European motor industry. Profits at the Oxford-based group increased 12.8 per cent to £32.6 million on sales 11.6 per cent higher at £364 million. Chief executive John Neill said exports had risen and substantial investment was made despite a constrained market recovery in the car and truck markets.

The results make it all the more surprising, therefore, that one institutional shareholder wants to sell part of its stake in the group. The unnamed institution and Unipart executives are understood to be in talks about how to manage the disposal without destabilising the group. Institutional investors hold 33 per cent of Unipart's equity, management and employees 48 per cent, and the car company Rover 19 per cent. The stakes have shifted considerably since the group was bought out in 1987 when the institutions held 54 per cent, Rover 24 per cent, and the management and employees 22 per cent. This is not the first time that Mr Neill has faced investors who want to realise gains from the company's growth. The value of Unipart shares has risen from 0.5p to £2 in eight years. After the buy-out, the chief executive used a buy-back scheme to allow institutional investors to sell some of their shares, thereby avoiding a flotation which would have forced Unipart to give dividends a higher priority at the expense of investment. News that another share-

holder now wants to sell part of its stake follows uncomfortably close on last year's uncertainty when Rover put pressure on Mr Neill and his fellow directors to accept an offer of about £170 million for the 50 per cent of the equity it does not already own. Mr Neill managed to repel the Rover approach, his supporters arguing that Unipart needed its existing share structure to foster the employee involvement which has enabled the company to lift productivity — by 30 per cent this year in some factories — and compete against "low cost" economies in the Far East. ALTHOUGH Mr Neill is reluctant to discuss the latest spell of investor restlessness, he says Unipart must be able to take the "long view" in its investment policies if it is to succeed. The track record is impressive. Profits have more than doubled in four years on turnover up by more than half in the same period. Dividends have also shot up, from £2 million in 1991 to £6.5 million last year. The pay-out is good news

for the shareholders among the 3,500-strong workforce. Their share of the dividend is about £1.87 million, or more than £500 each on average. The staff are also sitting on solid gains from the company's share option scheme of two years ago when options were granted at a 15 per cent discount to the prevailing value of £1.35, provided shares were also bought at the time. For Mr Neill, Unipart's success is bringing rewards, too. His salary and bonus last year were slightly up on 1994's £490,000, although final details await the publication of Unipart's annual report. From his 6 per cent stake in the company Mr Neill's share of the dividend pay-out is £380,000. The chief executive also exercised options on shares worth £135,000. Stressing that he has chosen to keep all his shares, Mr Neill delivered a trenchant defence of the Conservative Party's record in office and indicated that the company is likely to make its usual £40,000 donation. Although at least one shadow minister has visited Unipart and its extensive on-

site training facilities, Mr Neill urged Labour to spell out its policies before the election. Otherwise business would regard Tony Blair's policy announcements as pure showmanship. But Mr Neill is likely to be focusing more on the car and truck market than the election in the year ahead. Forecasting that chronic overcapacity will result in restructuring of "train smash" proportions, he said parts companies had to lift quality standards further, raise productivity more and be prepared to open their accounts to customers in an attempt to foster genuine partnership and mutually healthy profit margins. Although he does not say it, Unipart must also cut its dependence on Rover in case the company chooses not to renew its contract when it expires in 2002. Growth in mobile telecoms, more overseas business and contracts to handle parts for non-automotive customers are all likely to be high on the management agenda. Changes to the shareholding structure will be a distraction that Mr Neill could do without.

British Gas draws fire

Lisa Buckingham

BRITISH Gas is heading for another showdown with shareholders at its annual meeting next week after a decision by the consultancy group, Pirc, to recommend that investors should vote against the board on a raft of vital resolutions. Pirc says that corporate governance worries mean shareholders should veto the adoption of the accounts, vote against the appointment of four directors and oppose the reappointment of the auditors, KPMG. The company beat off a shareholder revolt over boardroom pay at last year's annual meeting, but only after an intense campaign to rally support from its institutional backers. Already, this year, relations between the group and its investors have been tested by a move from Noel Falconer, the veteran small shareholder campaigner, to force British Gas to accept a resolution that he should be appointed to the board. Pirc's voting advice looks set to raise the temperature of the meeting further. The consultancy organisation focuses on executive remuneration, which it says does not reflect the best practice recommended by the Greenbury committee. It argues that boardroom pay rises averaging 7 per cent, on top of last year's 45 per cent average increase, do not indicate that the remuneration committee has been "sensitive" to pay and conditions elsewhere in the company, as Greenbury recommended. Pirc also objects to the payment of "golden hellos" of £100,000 as well as two-year contracts to executive directors Stephen Brandon and Roy Gardner. It argues that British Gas could not give the outgoing chief executive, Cedric Brown, a chauffeur-driven car for his duties as president of the Institute of Gas Engineers. Dick Giordano should also hand over the chairmanship to a senior non-executive director when he assumes the post of chief executive ahead of the company's split into two organisations, Pirc says. Jeff Phillips, who resigned last September after six months as finance director of Costa Vivaldi, received compensation of £262,000 on top of £97,000 salary. The group's annual report says the remuneration committee "considered the appropriate amount" but does not explain how it arrived at its conclusions. Another director who resigned last March will continue to receive his salary until the end of this year. Costs is facing fierce criticism for its decision to close the Rainhill shirt factory on Merseyside.

News in brief

Union fears 10,000 Lloyds TSB job cuts

LLOYDS TSB announced yesterday it was to axe 500 jobs in Bristol and Birmingham in a move to streamline operations. A spokeswoman said the bank, which was formed by a merger of the two banks in 1995, needed only one administration centre and the existing TSB centre in Birmingham would be made redundant. The spokeswoman said every effort would be made to avoid compulsory redundancies. The banking union Unifil said the cuts were just the start and that the merger could eventually cost 10,000 jobs around the country. — Pauline Spragg

Halifax buys more agencies

BRITAIN'S biggest mortgage lender, the Halifax, which last year lost £12.3 million through its estate agency network, is to buy 11 more branches from the Alliance & Leicester. The A&L, which plans to float on the stock market early next year, had already announced its intention to dispose of its estate agency business which lost £4.9 million last year. The Halifax will boost its 610 loss-making estate agencies chain with the acquisition of 27 A&L branches on the south coast and six branches in Leicester. The A&L is negotiating to sell the remaining half of its network to other financial institutions. About 20 of the 180 staff employed in A&L's branches will be made redundant. — Teresa Hunter

Three bailed on charges

THREE men have been charged in connection with a scheme to raise funding for property development in Orlando, Florida. Their appearance before City of London magistrates followed investigations by the Bank of England. Peter Lennon, 53, of Bournemouth, is charged with offences under the Banking Act and the Forgery & Counterfeiting Act, while two former directors of Homesafe (Insurance Consultants), also known as Charlesworth Hyams Associates — Roger Charlesworth, 50, and Paul Hyams, 53, both of Southampton — were charged under the Banking Act. Mr Charlesworth is charged also under the Forgery & Counterfeiting Act. All have been granted bail. — Dan Adkinson

Trafalgar loses Thai contract

TRAFALGAR House has lost a \$650 million (£433 million) contract in Thailand to German competition despite the signing of a memorandum of understanding for the project witnessed by John Major and the Thai premier Banharn Silpa-archa in February. The project, to build an iron and steel complex, has gone to the Mannesmann group. TSSI, the client company, said a key reason why talks with Trafalgar — now owned by the Norwegian Kvaerner group — had failed was that Trafalgar had raised its price twice since the letter of intent was signed. A spokesman said that Mannesmann's plan would provide a bigger plant capacity that would help TSSI's cashflow. — Tony May

Vickers pursues Saudi deals

VICKERS chief executive Sir Colin Chandler yesterday played down the controversy surrounding Saudi dissident Mohammed al-Mas'ari and its possible effects on export orders to Saudi Arabia, particularly for the company's Challenger 2 battle tanks. Speaking at the company's annual meeting in London, Sir Colin described the Government's decision last week to rescind the deportation order against al-Mas'ari as a "minor setback". Vickers, together with French defence group GMAT, is currently in talks with the Saudi authorities for an order for 180 battle tanks. The order could be worth in excess of £500 million to Vickers if its Challenger 2 tank is preferred over the rival French LeClerc model. A decision is due sometime next year. — Eric Lipton

P&O gives Tories £100,000

THE shipping and property group, P&O, under growing City pressure to improve its lacklustre performance which saw a 6 per cent drop in profits last year, has maintained its position as one of the largest corporate supporters of the Conservative Party, with a contribution of £100,000. P&O, whose chairman, Lord Sterling, is a business adviser to the Government, remains second only to Hanson in terms of company contributions to the Conservatives. Tory coffers were also swelled by £25,000 last year from Kingfisher which owns Woolworths, B&Q and Comet. The group is, however, one of the few which backs the backing of shareholders for a political donation. — Lisa Buckingham

Water concerns 'unfounded'

SOUTH West Water said yesterday that concerns about supply interruptions and pollution incidents "had proved to be unfounded", although a report by the industry watchdog Ofwat report had identified shortfalls in the company's operations. "We will respond positively to this report which is helpful in underlining both satisfactory achievement in some areas and shortfalls in others." The investigation, which began in November 1995, covered six areas: drinking water compliance, supply interruptions, pollution incidents, sewer flooding, sewage treatment works improvements and bathing waters. — Rutter

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صوتنا من الامل

Ludlow (N.H.) tonight

Table of horse race results for Ludlow (N.H.) tonight, listing race numbers, names, and winners.

Taunton (N.H.) tonight

Table of horse race results for Taunton (N.H.) tonight, listing race numbers, names, and winners.

Racing Bosra Sham injury casts shadow over Guineas

Chris Hawkins Bosra Sham, hot favourite for the 1,000 Guineas, has had a setback...



Race against time... Bosra Sham, odds-on for the 1,000 Guineas, has ten days to recover

Carlisle

Table of horse race results for Carlisle, listing race numbers, names, and winners.

Perth (N.H.)

Table of horse race results for Perth (N.H.), listing race numbers, names, and winners.

Sandown with TV form

Table of horse race results for Sandown with TV form, listing race numbers, names, and winners.

Vertical advertisement on the left side of the page for 'JIMMERS DOWN RECOVERY' and 'CAR HIRE' services.

Raceline advertisement at the bottom right corner, featuring a table of race results and contact information.

Soccer

David Lacey on the goalless draw and missed chances of Terry Venables' team against Croatia on Wednesday

England look lost without Shearer

BETWEEN now and June 8, when England open the European Championship against Switzerland, there should be a national day of prayer for the well-being of Alan Shearer's groin.

This may represent a supreme act of faith, since the man in question, even when fit, has not scored for his country in nearly two seasons. But to pretend that England's principal hope of mak-

ing a decent list of the finals does not still rest with Shearer would be supreme folly.

Another goalless night at Wembley on Wednesday, against Croatia this time, emphasised the point. The good news about Terry Venables' team this season is that chances have been created at a greater rate. The bad is that they have been missed in roughly the same ratio.

Against Colombia in September England struck

a game under his belt and missed a couple of chances but did him good."

Statements get misheard amid the hubbub of a post-match press conference and this may have been a case in point. Either way, the only things that do goaleers any good are goals, and the lack of them remains the most worrying aspect of England's run-in to Euro '96.

It should have dawned on England by now that there is a world of difference between knocking heads off dandelions in the Premiership and scoring goals against European defenders who know their stuff. The first touches of Ferdinand and Fowler have appeared indifferent at the highest level. The three-man defence had cause to be grateful that Suker and Bosks were not greatly inclined to stress what was really needed.

In fact Croatia's entire approach was only marginally more interested than that of Bulgaria a month earlier. All

the pre-match talk about a new nation state finding inspiration at Wembley was so much Balkan Sobranie.

The more words swamp these occasions the more meaningless does the verbiage become. Those Bishop Abbey rituals, when England players are either just happy to be in the squad and never mind about being in the team, or are delighted to be in the team but would have been happy just to be in the squad, are becoming tiresome.

Word went round this week that Shearingham would not be giving interviews. Far from fulfilling themselves grief-stricken into the nearby Thames, the scribes retired to the pub for a period of thanksgiving.

There really is not much left to say. From now on, all that really matters is what happens, or does not happen, on the field. Venables has achieved the semblance of a balanced team but will be in trouble should Tony Adams

goal where the capacity for surprise is essential. Until McMannan began drifting into the middle, too much depended on Steve Stone's crosses reaching the head of Shearingham, not a play likely to cause sleepless nights in Italy or Germany.

Only Paul Gascoigne in recent years has consistently produced the unexpected for England, and as his fading contribution showed, he is not the player of 1990; and neither is David Platt. Peter Beardsley can still destroy a league defence with wit and skill, but in this respect McMannan is the only viable alternative for Euro '96.

England's next match is against Hungary on May 18, followed by the Far East tour to China and Hong Kong. By then Venables will know his squad. We're better than Shearer's groin has a relapse. The happiest sight for England on Wednesday was Scotland's defence being diced by the Landrups.



Robson ... England block

Robson at Boro until 1999

Mark Robson

ENGLAND had one avenue blocked in their quest to replace Terry Venables when Bryan Robson signed a new contract yesterday keeping him at Middlesbrough until 1999.

"I think the England job, if it was offered, would have come a bit too early," explained the England No. 2 yesterday. "I'd like to have more experience at club level before I took that step."

Robson, whose present contract expires next summer, said the money from his chairman Steve Gibson had helped persuade him to stay.

"I am looking to bring in more quality players for the start of next season," he said. "However, the deciding factor that really swayed me was the fact that the people of Teesside have backed the team and turned up in their droves week in and week out."

Gibson emphasised: "I only spoke to Bryan once about the England job and he said his future was here. That was good enough for me. He has always been true to his word and once he had given it we left the speculating to others."

Further evidence that the North-east is the place to be these days came when promoted Sunderland signed up for work to begin on a new £15-million stadium on a disused colliery site. The Wear-side should clinch the First Division title tomorrow at home to West Bromwich.

Meanwhile Newcastle's Faustino Asprilla scored the only goal in Colombia's home victory over Paraguay in a World Cup qualifier on Wednesday. As ever, nothing was plain sailing for the striker and he got back to his home room to discover he had been robbed of £1,000 and the obligatory club chair.

Further south Scunthorpe have appointed Mick Buxton as their manager for the second time. Buxton, who was in charge from 1987 to 1991 at Glanford Park, returned as caretaker two months ago to guide the side to an eight-match unbeaten run.

Sheffield Wednesday's injury-afflicted striker David Hirst is ready to end speculation about his future by signing a new contract.

"I'm very happy to stay and I'll do so if the deal is right," he said. "I've been here almost 10 years and I've enjoyed it apart from the injuries."

Jonathan Martin, BBC's head of sport and events, said: "This deal maintains our relationship with the game's millions of fans at a time of change."

Golf

Carlos is next king

Michael Brittan in Valencia

NOT for nothing is the province of Valencia known as the orchard of Spain. It is not only oranges that grow on trees in this part of the Iberian peninsula, so does talent.

Sergio Garcia, the 16-year-old European amateur champion, has already made his mark in Britain and elsewhere, but Carlos de Meral is only 10 years old, and he had to play truant to catch a glimpse of his idol Seve Ballesteros and the rest on the El Saler links this week.

Yet yesterday Peter Baker, who was hailed as Britain's boy wonder when he beat Nick Faldo in a play-off to win his first professional title eight years ago, was still talking about De Meral, one of his partners in the pro-am prologue, after the Midlander swept back to his best form with a first-round 67.

"It was amazing to see such a slender young boy hit the ball so far with a driver nearly as big as he is," he said. "He is the most stylish young player I have ever seen. Watching him brought home to me how important are good technique and tempo."

De Meral is the Spanish 10-year-old champion. Already his handicap is down to 13 and when he demonstrated his swing to Ballesteros the Ryder Cup captain declared: "He is better than I was at that age."

De Meral may well have a glorious future, which looks beyond Ballesteros after another mediocre performance yesterday. He shot 76 and, despite near-perfect conditions of warm sunshine and gentle breeze, managed only one birdie to trail the leading trio of Fabrice Tarnaud, Ross McFarlane and Diego Borrego by 10 strokes.



Class act ... Paul Newlove reminds the Saints coach of Mal Meninga

Rugby League

Newlove, a centre of attention

Paul Fitzpatrick on the proven Saint facing his old club Bradford at Wembley tomorrow

AS FAR as Shaun McRae is concerned someone must have been telling lies about Paul Newlove, the St Helens and Great Britain centre who will be aiming to confound his former club Bradford in tomorrow's St Helens Challenge Cup final at Wembley.

The Australian coach, who arrived at Knowsley Road from Canberra seven weeks after Newlove arrived from Odsal, had heard some worrying tales about the club's \$20,000 acquisition. He is still wondering why.

"The things I had heard about him were completely unfounded," says McRae. "I had heard that he was lazy and just wanted to play his own game; basically that you could not talk to him. But what I have found is that he has got the qualities of a champion athlete: he's coachable, he's willing to learn; he trains hard; he talks a lot about his game and he wants to improve all the time. I'm very happy to be coaching him rather than coaching against him."

It has not taken McRae long to appreciate that he has a thoroughbred under his control rather than a prima donna, and he reckons that Newlove is up there with Brisbane's Steve Renouf as one of the best centres in the world. Newlove also reminds him of Mal Meninga, and references do not come much more glowing than that.

"Like Mal he's a match-winning player: the type of athlete that can get you out of a bit of strife," says McRae.

St Helens went to their limits to acquire Newlove. They paid £250,000 in cash and let three players, Paul Loughlin, Bernard Dwyer and Sonny Nickle, all of whom are in the

Bradford side tomorrow, go in part exchange.

For St Helens the record package represented a massive psychological breakthrough in the battle with their arch-rivals Wigan.

David Howes, the club's chief executive, says: "The board here were very ambitious but there were certain things we had to do in a short period of time to convince the St Helens public in particular and rugby league in general that we meant business."

"Paul Newlove's signing showed that we could raise the money, albeit through sponsorship and loans; that we could persuade a player of Paul's class to come to Knowsley Road; and that we had strength of purpose, drive and determination."

More than Newlove, whose heart was no longer with Bradford, needed much persuading to join Saints. "This is a good young side, with youngsters coming through all the time. The excitement has been building here for some time and you feel that there will be an explosion sooner or later."

His talents make him a leading candidate for the

£10,000 prize put up by the sponsors for the first man to score three tries in a Wembley final. But for all his impressive qualities, Newlove may not have the centre stage all to himself.

On the opposite side will be Loughlin, a loser with Saints in the 1987, 1988 and 1991 finals and keen to prove that the club to whom he gave such long and devoted service made a serious error of judgment in letting him go.

There is also the emerging Matt Calland. Two weeks ago when Bradford played St Helens at Knowsley Road, they lost 26-20 but gave Saints a severe fright as their centre Calland ran in a hat-trick.

"Newlove's a good player. But I stopped him that day and I don't see any reason why I cannot do it again," says Calland.

He might, too, but all of the players on view tomorrow Newlove is the class act. In choosing a world team one might find it hard to include him. But it would also be mighty hard to leave him out.

Eric Hughes, who was dismissed as St Helens coach in January, has been appointed coach to Second Division Leigh in succession to Ian Lucas, who was dismissed this week. Hughes, aged 43, has signed a 3½-year contract.

BBC retains grip on the cup

THE BBC yesterday signed a new three-year deal for live coverage of the Rugby League Challenge Cup, writes Andrew Culf.

The deal secures one of the sporting mainstays of BBC's Grandstand during the winter. It ensures the BBC has a continued presence in rugby league coverage, which had been in doubt since Sky Sports grabbed exclusive coverage of the Super League.

Maurice Lindsay, chief executive of the Rugby Football League, said: "It is fair to say that our negotiations with the BBC have been lengthy, but we are delighted at the new agreement and the rights fees we will receive."

Jonathan Martin, BBC's head of sport and events, said: "This deal maintains our relationship with the game's millions of fans at a time of change."

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Sport in brief

Tennis
Spain's top two women players Conchita Martínez and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario have agreed to play in their country's Fed Cup tie against South Africa after sorting out a pay dispute with their federation.

Swimming
Scott Miller clocked 32.56sec, the second-fastest time ever for 100 metres butterfly, at

Australia's Olympic trials yesterday. Russia's Denis Pankrotov, who has beaten Miller in Atlanta.

Rugby League
A 15-year-old schoolboy player is fighting for his life in hospital after collapsing during the interval of a junior match. Gavin Williams suffered a suspected heart attack while playing for Featherstone and Castleford Boys against Oldham Boys at The Willows. The match was abandoned.

Results

Soccer
AVON INSURANCE COORDINATION: First Division: West Ham 3, Second Division: Birmingham 1, Burnley 1, Charlton Athletic 1, Plymouth 1, Newport AFC.

World Cup: South American qualifiers: Ecuador 4, Peru 3, Argentina 3, Bolivia 1, Venezuela 0, Uruguay 2, Colombia 1, Paraguay 0.

Rugby League
AUSTRALIAN PREMIERSHIP: Sydney City 62, South Sydney 0.

Golf
YUKIPANA MASTERS (Valencia, Sp): Leading professional scores (GB first unless stated): Zanussi, 68 R McFarlane; F Tarnaud (Fr); D Borrego (Sp); 67 N Bridges; T Johnson (Zim); R Baker; A Cabrera (Arg); 66 G Hall; R Burns; A Shearman (Sw); 65 K Harrison (Sw); 63 C Connor (Fr); J Gerardo (Sp); G Turner (NZ); W Riley (Aus); R Chapman; W Weir (SA); C Sureson (Sp); I Pymon; 70 D Oldcorn; C Rocco (Ir); F Coe (Sp); D Feeney; A Ferrara (Sp); J Robson; R Coler; P Haugrud (Nor); 71 L Woodcock; M Bassonov (Fr); J Lomas; M Ferry (Fr); S Romero (Arg); J Payne; M Gronberg (Den); J Van de Velde (Fr); M Pavia (It); A Callum; J Hooper; M Ison; S Boltovskoy; C O'Connor; Jr.

Darcy, D Howell; D Smyth; M Davis; P Harrington; A Collins; M Gales; M Lister; R Kerlanen (Fin); J Pinaro (Sp); P Spotted Woodcock (GB); M Pugh (W); H Barrington (SA); F Lindgren (Sw); F Ross (Sp); M McLean; R Drummond; P Walker; R Redford; G Nicholson (GB); C Cobo (Sp); S Cope; J Geary (Fr); J Coonan (Arg); P Broadhurst; D Hepburn (Sp); F Vazara (Sp); M Martin (Sp); A Horton; J Dwyer (Fr); Mores (Sp); M Macdonald; J Dickerton; T Gage; S Torrance; P McGinley; P Middleton (Sw); P J Johanson (Sw); G Hendon; R Russell; J Cantorine (Sp); M Ross; O Carter.

Tennis
MONTI CARLO OPEN: Third round: T Shearer (Aus) bt C Moye (Sp) 2-6, 7-6, 4-6; G Galt (GB) bt A Agazzi (It) 6-2, 5-1; R Miles (Chi) bt B Becker (Ger) 6-4, 6-3; F Marmota (Sp) bt J Sanchez (Sp) 7-6, 7-6, 6-3; R Smit (Zim) bt P Poole (GB) 6-2, 6-2; G Gattabasso (Sw) bt F Santoro (Fr) 7-6, 6-3; E Schillinger (Neth) bt R Kracklitz (Ger) 5-7, 7-6, 6-4; S Pless (Fr) bt I Leventov (Tur) 4-6, 6-0, 6-2.

SPRING SATELLITE (Edinburgh): New Zealand (NZ) 3, Tasmania (TAS) 0; 2, Queensland (QLD) 0, 3, 2; 3, New South Wales (NSW) 0, 1, 0; 4, 5, 2; 4, Victoria (VIC) 1, 0, 0; 5, 1, 0; 6, 2, 1; 7, 1, 1; 8, 2, 1; 9, 1, 1; 10, 1, 1; 11, 1, 1; 12, 1, 1; 13, 1, 1; 14, 1, 1; 15, 1, 1; 16, 1, 1; 17, 1, 1; 18, 1, 1; 19, 1, 1; 20, 1, 1.

Baseball
NATIONAL LEAGUE: Boston Red Sox 3, Philadelphia Phillies 1; Detroit Tigers 4, Minnesota Twins 3; New York Yankees 3, Chicago White Sox 2; St Louis Cardinals 6, Pittsburgh Pirates 2; San Diego Padres 5, San Francisco Giants 2; Houston Astros 4, Cincinnati Reds 2.

Baseball
AMERICAN LEAGUE: Minnesota Twins 3, Detroit Tigers 2; Texas Rangers 3, California Angels 1; New York Yankees 3, Chicago White Sox 2; Seattle Mariners 1, Kansas City Royals 0; NATIONAL LEAGUE: Philadelphia Phillies 1, Florida Marlins 0; Colorado Rockies 10, St Louis Cardinals 6; Los Angeles Dodgers 2, San Diego Padres 0; Chicago White Sox 4, Houston Astros 2.

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Ice Hockey
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP: Pool A: Group 1: Austria 2, Slovakia 1; Group 2: Pool B: Finland 2, Czech Republic 1; Pool C: Pool D: Canada 3, United States 2; Pool E: Pool F: Russia 2, Switzerland 1.

Soccer
EMERSON WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP: (Sheffield) First round: J Williams (Wales) bt J Miley (Eng) 10-3.

Boxing

King offers Lewis a deal

Jack Wasserk

DON KING yesterday offered Lennox Lewis a chance to challenge Mike Tyson for the WBC heavyweight title — but only if the Briton takes second place to Bruce Seldon in the queue.

Lewis's camp are unlikely to agree to this, having recently won a court judgment that effectively orders the WBC to reinstate him as mandatory No. 1 contender.

The day after Frank Bruno's eclipse by Tyson, King announced that Tyson would re-unify the division by challenging Seldon (the WBA champion) and Frans Botha (then IBF title holder), both of whom King controls.

The Lewis verdict hampers these plans. Rather than give Lewis first shot, however, King has come up with a typically labyrinthine compromise: a Tyson-Seldon fight without the WBC title at stake.

"If Mike wins, the WBC title goes back into effect and the first defence of the WBC title will be with Lennox Lewis," he said yesterday. "If Mike loses, the WBC title is vacant and Lennox Lewis has the opportunity to fight for that title against whoever."

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The Guardian Friday April 26 1996

Snooker
Players rally to Spencer

JOHN SPENCER, the first world champion to be crowned here at the Crucible Theatre 20 years ago, refused to comment yesterday on reports that he had placed bets on the half of other players in various tournaments...



Seal away... Shirley Robertson, a Scot based in Hampshire, wins the second of her three races in the Europe dinghy class of the Hyeres Olympic Week regatta in the south of France...

Cricket
Pollock adds lustre to a restyled cup

THE one-day game has come back under the spotlight less than seven weeks after England were given a lesson in tactics by the eventual World Cup winners Sri Lanka...

COUNTY GUIDE TO THE 1996 SEASON

Derbyshire

Championships (last three seasons): 14, 17, 15. Limited overs: 1995: NWT, 4-6; B&H, eliminated group stage; Sunday league (SL), 8th. Wicketless: 1995: 12th. Captains: Dean Jones...

Essex

Championships: 5, 6, 11. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, group; SL, 5th. Wicketless: 4th. Captains: Paul Prichard...

Kent

Championships: 18, 9, 8. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, runners-up; SL, winners. Wicketless: 11th. Captains: Mark Benson...

Leicestershire

Championships: 7, 2, 9. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, group; SL, 7th. Wicketless: 14th. Captains: James Whitaker...

Northamptonshire

Championships: 3, 5, 4. Limited overs: NWT, runners-up; B&H, group; SL, 13th. Wicketless: 7th. Captains: Rob Bailey...

Surrey

Championships: 12, 7, 6. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, group; SL, 8th. Wicketless: 2nd. Captains: Alec Stewart...

Warwickshire

Championships: 10, 15, 2. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, group; SL, 3rd. Wicketless: 8th. Captains: Tom Moody...

Yorkshire

Championships: 8, 13, 12. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, group; SL, 12th. Wicketless: 3rd. Captains: David Byas...

Durham

Championships: 17, 18, 18. Limited overs: NWT, Round 2; B&H, group; SL, 15th. Wicketless: 18th. Captains: Mike Roseberry...

Glamorgan

Championships: 16, 18, 3. Limited overs: NWT, 4-6; B&H, group; SL, 8th. Wicketless: 15th. Captains: Matthew Maynard...

Hampshire

Championships: 13, 13, 13. Limited overs: NWT, R1; B&H, group; SL, 18th. Wicketless: 10th. Captains: John Stephenson...

Lancashire

Championships: 4, 10, 14. Limited overs: NWT, 4-6; B&H, winners; SL, 4th. Wicketless: 9th. Captains: Mike Watkinson...

Middlesex

Championships: 2, 4, 1. Limited overs: NWT, 4-6; B&H, 4-6; SL, 17th. Wicketless: 1st. Captains: Mike Gatting...

Somerset

Championships: 9, 11, 5. Limited overs: NWT, R1; B&H, group; SL, 13th. Wicketless: 13th. Captains: Andy Hayhurst...

Sussex

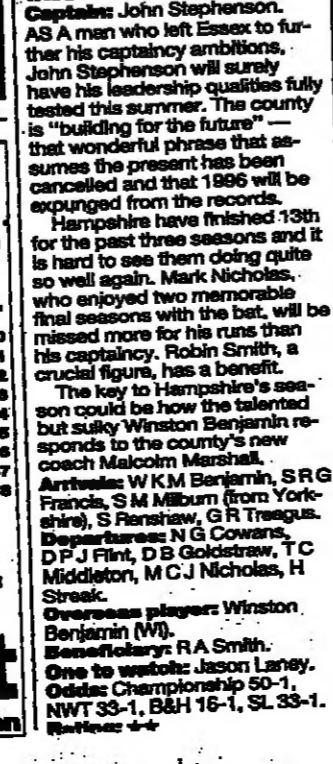
Championships: 15, 8, 10. Limited overs: NWT, R2; B&H, group; SL, 10th. Wicketless: 18th. Captains: Alan Wells...

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Winning ways... Dermot Reeve with the NatWest Trophy, one of two titles Warwickshire are defending this season



may not have the same pace. As captain, Mark Benson must be less conservative. Arrivals: C L Hooper, D Williams, C Penn, P A de Silva...

Tim Boon has gone but that should give Gregor MacMillan a run in the side. Arrivals: V Clarke, J Ormond, C Remy, D Stevens, D Williamson...

Johnson is also likely to favour more positive cricket, although apart from himself and the New Zealand all-rounder Chris Cairns his options here are limited. Arrivals: M Bowen (from Northants), A Metzger (from Yorkshire), C M Tolley (from Worcestershire), G Welford...

There has been a reputation for playing attractive cricket. One to watch: Nicky Phillips (off-spinner). Arrivals: E Hemmings, A North, M T E Peirce, C Barry, D Smith, F D Stephenson, Overseas players: Vesterb Drakes (WV), Beneficiary: Alan Wells...

Warwickshire Championships: 1, 1, 16. Limited overs: NWT, winners; B&H, group; SL, 2nd. Wicketless: 5th. Captains: Dermot Reeve. Arrivals: M Amjad, A Sheryar (from Leicestershire), D Edwards, N V Radford, C M Tolley, Overseas players: Tom Moody (Australia), Beneficiary: Steven Rhodes...

Injury scare for Guineas favourite, page 13
The class of Paul Newlove, page 14

Robson signs new deal at Boro, page 14
Full county cricket guide, page 15

SportsGuardian

SEEDS FALL ON BARREN GROUND IN MONTE CARLO OPEN



Down cast... Boris Becker wonders where it all went wrong against Marcelo Rios, and Andre Agassi waits in vain for inspiration against Alberto Costa

Feet of clay embarrass Agassi and Becker

ANDRE AGASSI suffered the unusual experience of being booed off centre court yesterday as the top seeds shrivelled and died in Monaco. The larger-than-life American was unable to adjust to the clay surface in his third-round 6-2, 6-1 defeat by Spain's Alberto Costa and departed in only 54 minutes to a cacophony of jeers and whistles. He was not alone in his embarrassment. Boris Becker paid the price for a lack of match practice when he went out 6-4, 6-3 to the unheralded Chilean Marcelo Rios, a defeat that left the title-holder Thomas Muster as the only top-10 seed in the draw. Agassi blamed time spent battling on hard courts for his problems in adapting to the slower surface. "It is very difficult, very difficult," he said. "Movement is everything and if you don't move as well as your opponent then you have to play great shots." On Wednesday his fellow American seeds Michael Chang and Jim Courier had also crashed out to clay-court specialists from Spain, as indeed did Sergi Bruguera, who happens to be Spanish himself. Muster beat Carlos Moyá, another Spaniard, 6-2, 7-6 to reach the quarter-finals. "My first set was the best I've played this season," said the Austrian.

Time to stop system which beggars belief



Paul Weaver

BEGGARS, said the man, "should be abolished", adding by way of explanation that "it annoys one to give to them and it annoys one not to give to them". It sounds rather like our leader, does it not, Downing Street's own Mr Bean. But no, those words were uttered by the German philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, whose name sounds like a sneeze, which is about all anyone ever got out of him. Now, it is well known that the Germans are duffers at cricket, but Herr Nietzsche obviously knew a thing or two about the county cricket beneficiaries, those fabled paupers from the age of feudalism, and he was spot on: they should be abolished. Today marks the beginning of the competitive county cricket season, and for 16 men it will be the toughest summer they have known. Phil Bainbridge, Paul Prichard, Matthew Maynard, Tony Wright, Robin Smith, Chris Penn, Mike Watkinson, Mike Gatting, Allan Lamb, Andy Pick, Richard Harden, David Ward, Alan Wells, Dermot Reeve, Steven Rhodes and Peter Hartley all have benefits or testimonials this year. The season has started and with it all the familiar sounds of cricket: bat on ball, the whispered blandishments of Mr Charles Colvill, and... pennies falling into begging bowls. The players concerned, who are all respected pros — otherwise they would not have been granted this perk of a lifetime — deserve every penny they get. What they do not deserve is the grovelling and humiliation that goes with it. Penn, the former Kent fast bowler, was on his way to a sponsored curry night when I spoke with him yesterday afternoon. "I felt ashamed and humbled the other day when I had to speak to 100 men from the City, most of whom didn't have a clue who I was, and ask them for money. The benefit system will almost certainly come to an end in the next few years. Until it does it is a vital source of income for the county pro. But it is desperately unfair on those who don't get one, such as Simon Hinks, who played county cricket for many years."

No entry for Rotterdam thugs

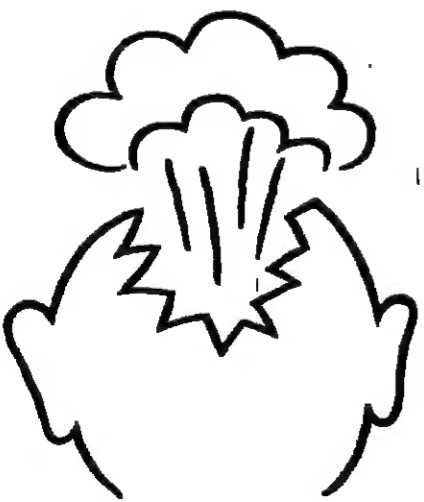
Michael Walker and Neil Robinson on Euro '96 security measures after the riot

MAJOR tightening of security for Euro '96 was promised yesterday in response to the crowd violence that marred Wednesday's soccer international between Holland and Germany in Rotterdam.

running battles with Dutch police would be prevented from travelling to Britain. The bans will be enforced by the German and Dutch authorities although the Home Office also has the power to issue exclusion orders to prevent known trouble-makers arriving in Britain for the tournament, which begins on June 8. The tournament director Gian Kirton said yesterday: "We have received a full report on the incident from the Dutch FA and the German FA. They have assured us that steps will be taken to prevent the fans who were arrested from attending Euro '96. Working in conjunction with the police, we will continue to target known trouble-makers. We do not intend to let a tiny minority of hooligans spoil the enjoyment of the vast majority of law-abiding supporters who will be attending Euro '96." On Wednesday a hard core of 1,400 fans, believed to be attached to the German First Division club Fortuna Cologne, chanted racist slogans, wrecked lavatories, ripped

senior security officers from the 16 participating countries on how the event will be policed. Det Insp Peter Chapman, head of the football unit at the National Criminal Intelligence Service, said he would be discussing the violence in Rotterdam with his European counterparts as a matter of urgency. "It's early stages but we will be speaking in the next few days to German and Dutch colleagues and devising a strategy," he said. He revealed that officers from the Metropolitan, West Midlands and Greater Manchester forces, who will police Dutch and German fans during Euro '96, were in Rotterdam to observe events. Holland are due to play their first-round matches at Villa Park in Birmingham and at Wembley. Germany will play their games at Old Trafford in Manchester. The Dutch and German associations, like those of all the countries who have qualified for the finals, are obliged by Uefa to keep detailed records of known trouble-makers and liaise with their

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Nude statues shock Atlanta

AMERICANS are familiar with cover-ups in public life, but not for many years have they seen one so match a decision taken yesterday by the Atlanta Olympic Games organising committee, writes Jack Massarik. In a move worthy of the Victorians, who used to drape curtain material discreetly around piano legs, they yesterday ordered two nude statues at Los Angeles Coliseum to be covered up for the start of the Olympic torch relay. Unable to find

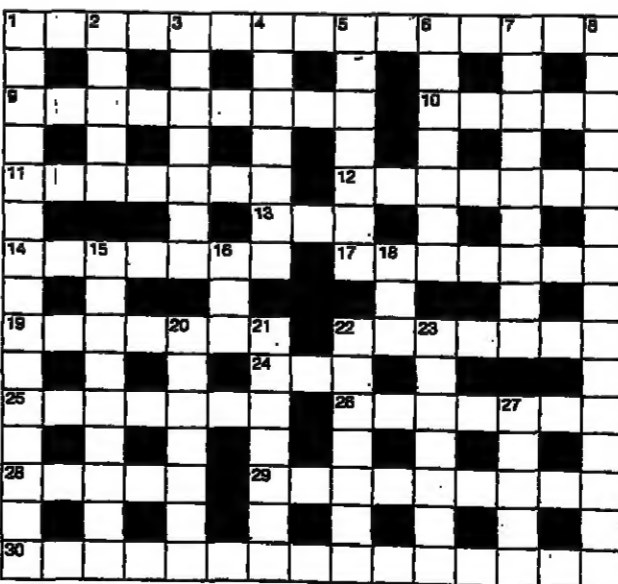
fig-leaves large enough for this essential task, officials are frantically trying to find some other way of concealing the sexually explicit sections of the sculptures from prying eyes. "It is an indecent way to start the torch relay," said a member of the Atlanta committee, all of whom feared that viewers of tomorrow's nationally televised ceremony at the Coliseum would find the nudity offensive. Coliseum officials were shaken too, but for a different reason. They pointed out that the statues, erected for the 1984 Games in Los Angeles, were anatomically correct representations of a male and female athlete, and important links to the stadium's Olympic history. Atlanta Games officials led by their chief executive, Billy Payne, are in Athens to receive the Olympic flame, which will be flown to Los Angeles tomorrow and transferred by helicopter to the Coliseum. Last night they were "not available for comment".

Bret Easton Ellis (a friend) tells Moore that her book is "the most shocking thing I've ever read". Let's say it loud: this is complete nonsense.
Elizabeth Young

Review page 13

Guardian Crossword No 20,637

Set by Gordius

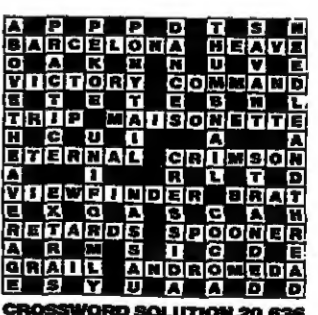


Across

- 1 Drunk on brewer's liquor, politician enters excellent defiance (10,5)
- 9 Lost reptile brought back by no fellow on Lamas Day (9)
- 10 Twenty pascetas will include all sorts (5)
- 11 Symbolic reflection one found in bed (7)
- 12 Class remains undisciplined (7)
- 13 Bird feared by Euro-sceptics? (3)
- 14 Publicity avoids involving Diana's initial... (7)
- 17 ... failure to answer charge of strong emotional involvement (7)
- 19 Love? Give us a ring about it — we've no feelings (7)
- 22 One who may expect some refusal to start granting easy entry (7)
- 24 Was she taken from Adam? (3)
- 25 With 17, turning us into byways... (7)

Down

- 1 When it's fixed the time is at hand (5,5,5)
- 2 Insult to west country town's not on (5)
- 3 First mount overtaken by similar one near Lewes (7)
- 4 Signs of power? (7)
- 5 Turpin's push-over also included accompanying words (5,2)
- 6 Diana merits a break (7)
- 7 Threatening child with finality (8)
- 8 He hopes to have business for life (9,6)
- 15 English advanced in vain before mating call (9)



CROSSWORD SOLUTION 20,637

- 16 A letter from 2... (3)
- 18 ... but first a drink (3)
- 20 To work fast is beneath the fashionable rich (7)
- 21 Greeted with a bit of luck instead for a change (7)
- 22 Called family in to establish pecking order (7)
- 23 Unofficial strike after leading fireman holds the sheet (7)
- 27 Organ featured in 15 (5)

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